# OBSERVATIONS

ON

A LATE

# STATE OF THE NATION.

" O Tite, ſi quid ego adjuvero curamve levaſſo,
" Quæ nunc te coquit, et verſat ſub pectore fixa,
" Ecquid erit pretii ?"

ENN. ap. CIC.

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1769

# OBSERVATIONS

## ON A LATE

# STATE OF THE NATION.

PARTY diviſions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inſeparable from free government. This is a truth which, I believe, admits little diſpute, having been eſtabliſhed by the uniform experience of all ages. The part a good citizen ought to take in theſe diviſions, has been a matter of much deeper controverſy. But God forbid, that any controverſy relating to our eſſential morals ſhould admit of no deciſion. It appears to me, that this queſtion, like moſt of the others which regard our duties in life, is to be determined by our ſtation in it. Private men may be wholly neutral, and entirely innocent: but they who are legally inveſted with public truſt, or ſtand on the high ground of rank and dignity, which is truſt implied, can hardly in any caſe remain indifferent, without the certainty of ſinking into inſignificance; and thereby in effect deſerting that poſt in which the fulleſt authority, and for the wiſeſt purpoſes, the laws and inſtitutions of their country had fixed them. However, if it be the office of thoſe who are thus circumſtanced, to take a decided part, it is no leſs their duty that it ſhould be a ſober one. It ought to be circumſcribed by the ſame laws of decorum, and balanced by the ſame temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not abſolutely enervate that vigour and quench that fervency of ſpirit, without which the beſt wiſhes for the public good muſt evaporate into empty ſpeculation.

It is probably from ſome ſuch motives that the friends of a very reſpectable party in this kingdom have been hitherto ſilent. For theſe two years paſt, from one and the ſame quarter of politicks a continual fire has been kept upon them; ſometimes from the unwieldy column of quartos and octavos; ſometimes from the light ſquadrons of occaſional pamphlets and flying ſheets. Every month has brought on its periodical calumny. The abuſe has taken every ſhape which the ability of the writers could give it; plain invective, clumſy raillery, miſrepreſented anecdote[a]. No method of vilifying the meaſures, the abilities, the intentions, or the perſons which compoſe that body, has been omitted.

On their part nothing was oppoſed but patience and character. It was a matter of the moſt ſerious and indignant affliction to perſons, who thought themſelves in conſcience bound to oppoſe a miniſtry, dangerous from its very conſtitution, as well as its meaſures, to find themſelves, whenever they faced their adverſaries, continually attacked on the rear by a ſet of men, who pretended to be actuated by motives ſimilar to theirs. They ſaw that the plan long purſued with but too fatal a ſucceſs, was to break the ſtrength of this kingdom; by frittering down the bodies which compoſe it; by fomenting bitter and ſanguinary animoſities, and by diſſolving every tie of ſocial affection and public truſt. Theſe virtuous men, ſuch I am warranted by public opinion to call them, were reſolved rather to endure every thing, than cooperate in that deſign. A diverſity of opinion upon almoſt every principle of politics, had indeed drawn a ſtrong line of ſeparation between them and ſome others. However, they were deſirous not to extend the misfortune by unneceſſary bitterneſs; they wiſhed to prevent a difference of opinion on the commonwealth from feſtering into rancorous and incurable hoſtility. Accordingly they endeavoured that all paſt controverſies ſhould be forgotten; and that enough for the day ſhould be the evil thereof. There is however a limit at which forbearance ceaſes to be a virtue. Men may tolerate injuries, whilſt they are only perſonal to themſelves. But it is not the firſt of virtues to bear with moderation the indignities that are offered to our country. A piece has at length appeared, from the quarter of all the former attacks, which

[a] Hiſtory of the Minority. Hiſtory of the Repeal of the Stamp-act. Conſiderations on Trade and Finances. Political Regiſter, &c. &c.

upon

upon every public conſideration demands an anſwer. Whilſt perſons more equal to this buſineſs may be engaged in affairs of greater moment, I hope I ſhall be excuſed, if, in a few hours of a time not very important, and from ſuch materials as I have by me (more than enough however for this purpoſe) I undertake to ſet the facts and arguments of this wonderful performance in a proper light. I will endeavour to ſtate what this piece is; the purpoſe for which I take it to have been written; and the effects (ſuppoſing it ſhould have any effect at all) it muſt neceſſarily produce.

This piece is called, *The preſent State of the Nation.* It may be conſidered as a ſort of digeſt of the avowed maxims of a certain political ſchool, the effects of whoſe doctrines and practices this country will feel long and ſeverely. It is made up of a farrago of almoſt every topic which has been agitated in parliamentary debate, or private converſation, on national affairs, for theſe ſeven laſt years. The oldeſt controverſies are hawled out of the duſt with which time and neglect had covered them. Arguments ten times repeated, a thouſand times anſwered before, are here repeated again. Public accounts formerly printed and reprinted revolve once more, and find their old ſtation in this ſober meridian. All the common-place lamentations upon the decay of trade, the encreaſe of taxes, and the high price of labour and proviſions, are here retailed again and again in the ſame tone with which they have drawled through columns of Gazetteers and Advertiſers, for a century together. Paradoxes which affront common ſenſe, and unintereſting barren truths which generate no concluſion, are thrown in to augment unwieldy bulk, without adding any thing to weight. Becauſe two accuſations are better than one, contradictions are ſet ſtaring one another in the face, without even an attempt to reconcile them. And to give the whole a ſort of portentous air of labour and information, the table of the Houſe of Commons is ſwept into this grand reſervoir of politicks.

As to the compoſition, it bears a ſtriking and whimſical reſemblance to a funeral ſermon, not only in the pathetic prayer with which it concludes, but in the ſtyle and tenour of the whole performance. It is piteouſly doleful, nodding every now and then towards dulneſs; well ſtored with pious frauds, and, like moſt diſcourſes of the ſort, much better calculated for the private advantage of the preacher than the edification of the hearers.

The author has indeed ſo involved his ſubject that it is frequently far from being eaſy to comprehend his meaning. It is happy for the public that it is never difficult to fathom his deſign. The apparent intention of this author is to draw the moſt aggravated, hideous and deformed picture of the ſtate of this country, which his querulous eloquence, aided by the arbitrary dominion he aſſumes over fact, is capable of exhibiting. Had he attributed our misfortunes to the true cauſe, the injudicious tampering of bold, improvident and viſionary miniſters at one period, or to their ſupine negligence and traiterous diſſentions at another, the complaint had been juſt, and might have been uſeful. But far the greater and much the worſt part of the ſtate which he exhibits, is owing, according to his repreſentation, not to accidental and extrinſic miſchiefs attendant on the nation, but to its radical weakneſs, and conſtitutional diſtempers. All this however is not without purpoſe. The author is in hopes that when we are fallen into a fanatical terror for the national ſalvation, we ſhall then be ready to throw ourſelves, in a ſort of precipitate truſt, ſome ſtrange diſpoſition of the mind jumbled up of preſumption and deſpair, into the hands of the moſt pretending and forward undertaker. One ſuch undertaker at leaſt he has in readineſs for our ſervice. But let me aſſure this generous perſon, that, however he may ſucceed in exciting our fears for the public danger, he will find it hard indeed to engage us to place any confidence in the ſyſtem he propoſes for its ſecurity.

His undertaking is great. The purpoſe of this pamphlet, and at which it aims directly and obliquely in every page, is to perſuade the public of three or four of the moſt difficult points in the world——that all the advantages of the late war were on the part of the Bourbon alliance; that the peace of Paris perfectly conſulted the dignity and intereſt of this country; and that the American Stamp-act was a maſter piece of policy and finance; that the only good miniſter this nation has enjoyed ſince his majeſty's acceſſion, is the earl of Bute; and the only good managers of revenue we have ſeen are lord Deſpenſer and Mr. George Grenville; and under the deſcription of men of virtue and ability, he holds them out to us as the only perſons fit to put our affairs in order. Let not the reader miſtake me; he does not actually name theſe perſons; but having highly applauded their conduct in all its parts, and heavily cenſured every other ſet of men in the

the kingdom, he then recommends us to his men of virtue and ability.

Such is the author's ſcheme. Whether it will anſwer his purpoſe, I know not. But ſurely that purpoſe ought to be a wonderfully good one to warrant the methods he has taken to compaſs it. If the facts and reaſonings in this piece are admitted, it is all over with us. The continuance of our tranquillity depends upon the compaſſion of our rivals. Unable to ſecure to ourſelves the advantages of peace, we are at the ſame time utterly unfit for war. It is impoſſible, if this ſtate of things be credited abroad, that we can have any alliance; all nations will fly from ſo dangerous a connection, leſt, inſtead of being partakers of our ſtrength, they ſhould only become ſharers in our ruin. If it is believed at home, all that firmneſs of mind, and dignified national courage, which uſed to be the great ſupport of this iſle againſt the powers of the world, muſt melt away, and fail within us.

In ſuch a ſtate of things can it be amiſs, if I aim at holding out ſome comfort to the nation; another ſort of comfort indeed, than that which this writer provides for it; a comfort, not from its phyſician, but from its conſtitution; if I attempt to ſhew that all the arguments upon which he founds the decay of that conſtitution, and the neceſſity of that phyſician, are vain and frivolous? I will follow the author cloſely in his own long career, through the war, the peace, the finances, our trade, and our foreign politicks: not for the ſake of the particular meaſures, which he diſcuſſes; that can be of no uſe; they are all decided; their good is all enjoyed, or their evil incurred: but for the ſake of the principles of war, peace, trade, and finances. Theſe principles are of infinite moment. They muſt come again and again under conſideration; and it imports the public, of all things, that thoſe of its miniſter be enlarged, and juſt, and well confirmed upon all theſe ſubjects. What notions this author entertains, we ſhall ſee preſently; notions in my opinion very irrational, and extremely dangerous; and which, if they ſhould crawl from pamphlets into counſels, and be realized from private ſpeculation into national meaſures, cannot fail of haſtening and compleating our ruin.

This author, after having paid his compliment to the ſhewy appearances of the late war in our favour, is in the utmoſt haſte to tell you that theſe appearances were *fallacious*, that they were no more than an *impoſition*.——I fear I muſt trouble the reader with a pretty long quotation, in order to

ſet before him the more clearly this author's peculiar way of conceiving and reaſoning:

" Happily (the K.) was then adviſed by miniſters, who " did not ſuffer themſelves to be dazzled by the glare of bril- " liant appearances; but, knowing them to be *fallacious*, " they wiſely reſolved to profit of their ſplendour before our " enemies ſhould alſo *diſcover the impoſition*.——The increaſe " in the exports was found to have been occaſioned chiefly by " the demands of *our own fleets and armies*, and, inſtead " of bringing wealth to the nation, were to be paid by op- " preſſive taxes upon the people of England. While the " Britiſh ſeamen were conſuming on board our men of war " and privateers, foreign ſhips and foreign ſeamen were em- " ployed in the tranſportation of our merchandize; and the " carrying trade, ſo great a ſource of wealth and marine, " *was intirely ingroſſed by the neutral nations*. The number " of Britiſh ſhips annually arriving in our ports was reduced " 1756 ſail, containing 92,559 tons, on a medium of the " ſix years war, compared with the ſix years of peace pre- " ceding it.—The conqueſt of the Havannah had, indeed, " ſtopped the remittance of ſpecie from Mexico to Spain; " but it had not enabled England to ſeize it: on the contra- " ry, our merchants ſuffered by the detention of the gal- " leons, as their *correſpondents in Spain were diſabled from pay- " ing them for their goods ſent to America. The loſs of the trade " to Old Spain was a farther bar to an influx of ſpecie*; and " the attempt upon Portugal had not only deprived us of an " import of bullion from thence, but the payment of our " troops employed in its defence was a freſh drain opened " for the diminution of our circulating ſpecie——The high " premiums given for new loans had ſunk the price of the " old ſtock near a third of its original value, ſo that the " purchaſers had an obligation from the ſtate to repay them " with an addition of 33 *per cent.* to their capital. Every " new loan required new taxes to be impoſed; new taxes " muſt add to the price of our manufactures, *and leſſen their " conſumption among foreigners*. The decay of our trade " muſt neceſſarily *occaſion a decreaſe of the public revenue*; " and a deficiency of our funds muſt either be made up by " freſh taxes, which would only add to the calamity, or our " national credit muſt be deſtroyed, by ſhewing the public " creditors the inability of the nation to repay them their " principal money.——Bounties had already been given for " recruits which exceeded the year's wages of the plowman

" and

" and reaper; and as theſe were exhauſted, and *huſbandry*
" *ſtood ſtill for want of hands*, the manufacturers were
" next to be tempted to quit the anvil and the loom by
" higher offers. —— *France, bankrupt France, had no ſuch*
" *calamities impending over her; her diſtreſſes were great,*
" *but they were immediate and temporary; her want of cre-*
" *dit preſerved her from a great increaſe of debt, and the*
" *loſs of her ultra marine dominions leſſened her expences.*
" *Her colonies had, indeed, put themſelves into the hands of*
" *the Engliſh; but the property of her ſubjects had been pre-*
" *ſerved by capitulations, and a way opened for making her*
" *thoſe remittances, which the war had before ſuſpended,*
" *with as much ſecurity as in time of peace.* —— Her armies
" in Germany had been hitherto prevented from ſeizing
" upon Hanover; but they continued to encamp on the
" ſame ground on which the firſt battle was fought; and, as
" it muſt ever happen from the policy of that government,
" *the laſt troops ſhe ſent into the field were always found to*
" *be the beſt, and her frequent loſſes only ſerved to fill her*
" *regiments with better ſoldiers. The conqueſt of Hanover*
" *became therefore every campaign more probable.* It is to be
" noted, that the French troops received ſubſiſtence only,
" for the laſt three years of the war; and that although
" large arrears were due to them at its concluſion, the charge
" was the leſs during its continuance."

If any one be willing to ſee to how much greater lengths the author carries theſe ideas, he will recur to the book. This is ſufficient for a ſpecimen of his manner of thinking. I believe one reflection uniformly obtrudes itſelf upon every reader of theſe paragraphs. For what purpoſe in any cauſe ſhall we hereafter contend with France? can we ever flatter ourſelves that we ſhall wage a more ſucceſsful war? If, on our part, in a war the moſt proſperous we ever carried on, by ſea and by land, and in every part of the globe, attended with the unparalleled circumſtance of an immenſe increaſe of trade and augmentation of revenue; if a continued ſeries of diſappointments, diſgraces, and defeats, followed by public bankruptcy on the part of France, if all theſe ſtill leave her a gainer on the whole balance, will it not be downright phrenzy in us ever to look her in the face again, or to contend with her any, even the moſt eſſential points, ſince victory and defeat, though by different ways equally conduct us to our ruin? Subjection to France without a ſtruggle will indeed be leſs for our honour, but on every principle of

our author it muſt be more for our advantage. According to his repreſentation of things, the queſtion is only concerning the moſt eaſy fall. France had not diſcovered, our ſtateſman tells us, at the end of that war the triumphs of defeat, and the reſources which are derived from bankruptcy. For my poor part, I do not altogether wonder at their blindneſs. But the Engliſh miniſters ſaw further. Our author has at length let foreigners alſo into the ſecret, and made them altogether as wiſe as ourſelves. It is their own fault if *(vulgato imperii arcano)* they are impoſed upon any longer. They now are apprized of the ſentiments which the great candidate for the government of this great empire entertains; and they will act accordingly. They are taught our weakneſs and their own advantages.

He tells the world, that if France carries on the war againſt us in Germany, every loſs ſhe ſuſtains contributes to the atchievement of her conqueſt. If her armies are three years unpaid, ſhe is the leſs exhauſted by expence. If her credit is deſtroyed, ſhe is the leſs oppreſſed with debt. If her troops are cut to pieces, they will by her policy (and a wonderful policy it is) be improved, and will be ſupplied with much better men. If the war is carried on in the colonies, he tells them that the loſs of her ultramarine dominions leſſens her expences, and enſures her remittances:

*Per damna, per cædes, ab ipſo*
*Ducit opes animumque ferro.*

If ſo, what is it we can do to hurt her? — It will be all an *impoſition*, all *fallacious*. Why the reſult muſt be — *Occidit, occidit ſpes omnis & fortuna noſtri nominis.*

The only way which the author's principles leave for our eſcape, is to reverſe our condition into that of France, and to take her loſing cards into our hands. But, though his principles drive him to it, his politicks will not ſuffer him to walk on this ground. Talking at our eaſe and of other countries, we may bear to be diverted with ſuch ſpeculations; but in England we ſhall never be taught to look upon the annihilation of our trade, the ruin of our credit, the defeat of our armies, and the loſs of our ultramarine dominions (whatever the author may think of them), to be the high road to proſperity and greatneſs.

The reader does not, I hope, imagine that I mean ſeriouſly to ſet about the refutation of theſe uningenious paradoxes and reveries without imagination. I ſtate them only that we may diſcern a little in the queſtions of war and peace,

the

the moſt weighty of all queſtions, what is the wiſdom of thoſe men, who are held out to us as the only hope of an expiring nation. The preſent miniſtry is indeed of a ſtrange character: at once indolent and diſtracted But if a miniſterial ſyſtem ſhou'd be formed actuated by ſuch maxims as are avowed in this piece, the vices of the preſent miniſtry would become their virtues; their indolence would be the greateſt of all public benefits, and a diſtraction that entirely defeated every one of their ſchemes would be our only ſecurity from deſtruction.

To have ſtated theſe reaſonings is enough, I preſume, to do their buſineſs. But they are accompanied with facts and records, which may ſeem of a little more weight. I truſt however that the facts of this author will be as far from bearing the touchſtone, as his arguments On a little inquiry, they will be found as great an impoſition as the ſucceſſes they are meant to depreciate; for they are all either falſe or fallaciouſly applied; or not in the leaſt to the purpoſe for which they are produced.

Firſt the author, in order to ſupport his favourite paradox, that our poſſeſſion of the French colonies was of no detriment to France, has thought proper to inform us that "they put themſelves into the hands of the Engliſh." He uſes the ſame aſſertion, in nearly the ſame words, in another place; "Her colonies had put themſelves into our hands." Now, in juſtice not only to fact and common ſenſe, but to the incomparable valour and perſeverance of our military and naval forces thus unhandſomely traduced, I muſt tell this author, that the French colonies did not "put themſelves into the hands of the Engliſh." They were compelled to ſubmit; they were ſubdued by dint of Engliſh valour. Will the five years war carried on in Canada, in which fell one of the principal hopes of this nation; and all the battles loſt and gained during that anxious period, convince this author of his miſtake? Let him inquire of Sir Jeffery Amherſt, under whoſe conduct that war was carried on; of Sir Charles Saunders, whoſe ſteadineſs and preſence of mind ſaved our fleet, and were ſo eminently ſerviceable in the whole courſe of the ſiege of Quebec; of General Monkton, who was ſhot through the body there, whether France "put her colonies into the hands of the Engliſh?"

Though he has made no exception, yet I would be liberal to him; perhaps he means to confine himſelf to her colonies in the Weſt Indies. But ſurely it will fare as ill with him there

there as in North America, whilſt we remember that in our firſt attempt on Martinico we were actually defeated; that it was three months before we reduced Gaudaloupe; and that the conqueſt of the Havannah was atchieved by the higheſt conduct, aided by circumſtances of the greateſt good fortune. He knows the expence both of men and treaſure at which we bought that place. However, if it had ſo pleaſed the peace-makers, it was no dear purchaſe; for it was deciſive of the fortune of the war and the terms of the treaty: the duke of Nivernois thought ſo; France, England, Europe, conſidered it in that light; all the world except the then friends of the then miniſtry, who wept for our victories, and were in haſte to get rid of the burthen of our conqueſts. This author knows that France did not put thoſe colonies into the hands of England; but he well knows who did put the moſt valuable of them into the hands of France.

In the next place our author is pleaſed to conſider the conqueſt of theſe colonies in no other light than as a convenience for the remittances to France, which he aſſerts that the war had before ſuſpended, but for which a way was opened (by our conqueſt) as ſecure as in time of peace. I charitably hope he knows nothing of the ſubject. I referred him lately to our commanders for the reſiſtance of the French colonies; I now wiſh he would apply to our cuſtom-houſe entries, and our merchants, for the advantages which we derived from them.

In 1761, there was no entry of goods from any of the conquered places but Guadaloupe; in that year, it ſtood thus:

| | | £. |
|---|---|---|
| Imports from Guadaloupe, | value, | 482.179 |
| In 1762, when we had not yet delivered up our conqueſts, the account was, | | |
| Guadaloupe, | | 513.244 |
| Martinico, | | 288.425 |
| Total imports, | | £. 801.669 |

In

In 1763, after we had delivered up the ſovereignty of theſe iſlands, but kept open a communication with them, the imports were,

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Guadaloupe, | 412.303 |
| Martinico, | 344.161 |
| Havannah, | 249.386 |
| Total imports in 1763, value, £. | 1.005.850 |

Beſides, I find in the account of bullion imported and brought to the bank, that, during the period in which the intercourſe with the Havannah was open, we received at that one ſhop, in treaſure, from that one place, £. 559.810; in the year 1763, £. 389.450; ſo that the import from theſe places in that year amounted to £. 1.395.300.

On this ſtate the reader will obſerve, that I take the imports from, and not the exports to, theſe conqueſts, as the meaſure of the advantages which we derived from them. I do ſo for reaſons which will be ſomewhat worthy the attention of ſuch readers as are fond of this ſpecies of inquiry. I ſay therefore I chooſe the import article, as the beſt, and indeed the only ſtandard we can have, of the value of the Weſt India trade. Our export entry does not comprehend the greateſt trade we carry on with any of the Weſt India iſlands, the ſale of negroes; nor does it give any idea of two other advantages we draw from them; the remittances for money ſpent here, and the payment of part of the balance of the North American trade. It is therefore quite ridiculous, to ſtrike a balance merely on the face of an exceſs of imports and exports, in that commerce; though, in moſt foreign branches, it is, on the whole, the beſt method. If we ſhould take that ſtandard, it would appear, that the balance with our own iſlands is, annually, ſeveral hundred thouſand pounds againſt this country [e]. Such is its aſpect on the

| | £. |
|---|---|
| [e] Total imports from the Weſt Indies in 1764, | 2,909,411 |
| Exports to ditto in ditto, | 896,511 |
| Exceſs of imports, | £. 2,012,900 |

In this, which is the common way of ſtating the balance, it will appear upwards of two millions againſt us; which is ridiculous.

cuſtom-houſe

cuſtom-houſe entries; but we know the direct contrary to be the fact. We know that the Weſt Indians are always indebted to our merchants, and that the value of every ſhilling of Weſt India produce is Engliſh property. So that our import from them, and not our export, ought always to be conſidered as their true value; and this corrective ought to be applied to all general balances of our trade, which are formed on the ordinary principles.

If poſſible, this was more emphatically true of the French Weſt India iſlands, whilſt they continued in our hands. That none, or only a very contemptible part, of the value of this produce, could be remitted to France, the author will ſee, perhaps with unwillingneſs, but with the cleareſt conviction, if he conſiders, that in the year 1763, *after we had ceaſed to export* to the iſles of Guadaloupe and Martinico, and to the Havannah, and after the colonies were free, to ſend all their produce to Old France and Spain, if they had any remittance to make; he will ſee, that we imported from theſe places, in that year, to the amount of £. 1.395.300. So far was the whole annual produce of theſe iſlands from being adequate to the payments of their annual call upon us, that this mighty additional importation was neceſſary, though not quite ſufficient, to diſcharge the debts contracted in the few years we held them. The property, therefore, of their whole produce, was ours, not only during the war, but even for more than a year after the peace. The author, I hope, will not again venture upon ſo raſh and diſcouraging a propoſition, concerning the nature and effect of theſe conqueſts, as to call them a convenience to the remittances of France; he ſees by this account, that what he aſſerts, is not only without foundation, but even impoſſible to be true.

As to our trade at that time, he labours with all his might to repreſent it as abſolutely ruined, or on the very edge of ruin. Indeed, as uſual with him, he is often as equivocal in his expreſſion, as he is clear in his deſign. Sometimes he more than inſinuates a decay of our commerce in that war; ſometimes he admits an encreaſe of exports; but it is in order to depreciate the advantages we might appear to derive from that encreaſe, whenever it ſhould come to be proved againſt him. He tells you "that it was chiefly occaſioned "by the demands of our own fleets and armies, and inſtead "of bringing wealth to the nation, were to be paid for by "oppreſſive taxes upon the people of England." Never

was

was any thing more deſtitute of foundation. It might be proved with the greateſt eaſe, from the nature and quality of the goods exported, as well as from the ſituation of the places to which our merchandiſe was ſent, and which the war could no ways effect, that the ſupply of our fleets and armies could not have been the cauſe of this wonderful encreaſe of trade: its cauſe was evident to the whole world; the ruin of the trade of France, and our poſſeſſion of her colonies. What wonderful effects this cauſe produced, the reader will ſee below [d]; and he will form on that account ſome judgment of the author's candour or information.

Admit however that a great part of our export, which is the remoteſt in the world from fact, was owing to our ſupply of our fleets and armies; was it not ſomething?——was it not peculiarly fortunate for a nation, that ſhe was able from her own boſom to contribute largely to the ſupply of her armies militating in ſo many diſtant countries? The author allows that France did not enjoy the ſame advantages.

| | 1754 £. | s. | d. | 1761 £. | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| [d] Total export of Britiſh goods, value, | *8,317,506 | 15 | 3 | *10,649,581 | 12 | 6 |
| Ditto of foreign goods in time, | 2,910,836 | 14 | 9 | 3,553,692 | 7 | 1 |
| Ditto of ditto out of time, | 559,485 | 2 | 10 | 355,015 | 0 | 2 |
| Total exports of all kinds, | 11,787,828 | 12 | 10 | 14,558,288 | 19 | 9 |
| Total imports, | 8,093,472 | 15 | 0 | 9,294,915 | 1 | 6 |
| Balance in favour of England, | £. 3,694,355 | 17 | 10 | £. 5,263,373 | 18 | 3 |

Here is the ſtate of our trade in 1761, compared with a very good year of profound peace; both are taken from the authentic entries of the cuſtom-houſe. How the author can contrive to make this encreaſe of the export of Engliſh produce agree with his account of the dreadful want of hands in England, p. 8, unleſs he ſuppoſes manufactures to be made without hands, I really do not ſee. It is painful to be ſo frequently obliged to ſet this author right in matters of fact. This ſtate will fully refute all that he has ſaid or inſinuated upon the difficulties and decay of our trade, p. 4, and 8.

But

But it is remarkable throughout his whole book, that thoſe circumſtances which have ever been conſidered as great benefits, and deciſive proofs of national ſuperiority, are, when in our hands, taken either in diminution of ſome other apparent advantage, or even ſometimes as poſitive misfortunes. The opticks of that politician muſt be of a ſtrange conformation, who beholds every thing in this diſtorted light.

So far as to our trade. With regard to our navigation, he is ſtill more uneaſy at our ſituation, and ſtill more fallacious in his ſtate of it. In his text, he affirms it "to have been *entirely* engroſſed by the neutral nations." This he aſſerts roundly and boldly, and without the leaſt concern; although it coſts no more than a ſingle glance of the eye upon his own margin to ſee the full refutation of this aſſertion. His own account proves againſt him, that in the year 1761 the Britiſh ſhipping amounted to 527,557 tons — the foreign to no more than 180,102. The medium of his ſix years Britiſh, 2,449,555 tons —— foreign only, 906,690. This ſtate (his own) demonſtrates that the neutral nations did not *entirely engroſs our navigation.*

I am willing from a ſtrain of candour to admit that this author ſpeaks at random; that he is only ſlovenly and inaccurate, and not fallacious. In matters of account, however, this want of care is not excuſable: and the difference between neutral nations entirely engroſſing our navigation, and being only ſubſidiary to a vaſtly augmented trade, makes a moſt material difference to his argument. From that principle of fairneſs, though the author ſpeaks otherwiſe, I am willing to ſuppoſe he means no more than that our navigation had ſo declined as to alarm us with the probable loſs of this valuable object. I ſhall however ſhew, that his whole propoſition, whatever modifications he may pleaſe to give it, is without foundation; that our navigation was not decreaſed: that on the contrary it was greatly encreaſed in the war; that it was encreaſed by the war; and that it was probable the ſame cauſe would continue to augment it to a ſtill greater height; to what an height it is hard to ſay, had our ſucceſs continued.

But firſt I muſt obſerve, I am much leſs ſolicitous whether his fact be true or no, than whether his principle is well eſtabliſhed. Caſes are dead things. principles are living and productive. I then affirm that, if in time of war our trade had the good fortune to encreaſe, and at the ſame time a large, nay the largeſt, proportion of carriage had been engroſſed by neutral nations, it ought not in itſelf to have been

been conſidered as a circumſtance of diſtreſs. War is a time of inconvenience to trade; in general it muſt be ſtraitened, and muſt find its way as it can. It is often happy for nations that they are able to call in neutral navigation. They all aim at it. France endeavoured at it, but could not compaſs it. Will this author ſay, that, in a war with Spain, ſuch a convenience would not be of abſolute neceſſity, that it would not be the moſt groſs of all follies to refuſe it?

In the next place, his method of ſtating a medium of ſix years of war, and ſix years of peace, to decide this queſtion, is altogether unfair. To ſay, in derogation of the advantages of a war, that navigation is not equal to what it was in time of peace, is what hitherto has never been heard of. No war ever bore that teſt but the war which he ſo bitterly laments. One may lay it down as a maxim, that an average eſtimate of an object in a ſteady courſe of riſing or of falling, muſt in its nature be an unfair one; more particularly if the cauſe of the riſe or fall be viſible, and its continuance in any degree probable. Average eſtimates are never juſt but when the object fluctuates; and no reaſon can be aſſigned why it ſhould not continue ſtill to fluctuate. The author chuſes to allow nothing at all for this: he has taken an average of ſix years of the war. He knew, for every body knows, that the firſt three years were on the whole rather unſucceſsful; and that, in conſequence of this ill ſucceſs, trade ſunk, and navigation declined with it; but *that grand deluſion* of the three laſt years turned the ſcale in our favour. At the beginning of that war (as in the commencement of every war), traders were ſtruck with a ſort of pannick. Many went out of the freighting buſineſs. But by degrees, as the war continued, the terror wore off; the danger came to be better appreciated, and better provided againſt; our trade was carried on in large fleets, under regular convoys, and with great ſafety. The freighting buſineſs revived. The ſhips were fewer, but much larger; and though the number decreaſed, the tonnage was vaſtly augmented; inſomuch that in 1761, the *Britiſh* ſhipping had riſen by the author's own account to 527,557 tons.—In the laſt year he has given us of the peace it amounted to no more than 494,772; that is, in the laſt year of the war it was 32,785 tons more than in the correſpondent year of his peace average. No year of the peace exceeded it except one, and that but little.

The fair account of the matter is this. Our trade had, as we have juſt ſeen, encreaſed to ſo aſtoniſhing a degree in

1761,

1761, as to employ Britiſh and foreign ſhips to the amount of 707,659 tons, which is 149,500 more than we employed in the laſt year of the peace.—Thus our trade encreaſed more than a fifth; our Britiſh navigation had encreaſed likewiſe with this aſtoniſhing increaſe of trade, but was not able to keep pace with it; and we added about 60,000 ton more of foreign ſhipping than had been employed in the laſt year of peace.—Whatever happened to our ſhipping in the former years of the war, this would be no true ſtate of the caſe at the time of the treaty. If we had loſt ſomething in the beginning, we had then recovered, and more than recovered, all our loſſes. Here is the ſubject of the doleful complaints of the author, that *the carrying trade was wholly engroſſed by the neutral nations.*

I have done fairly, and even very moderately, in taking this year, and not his average, as the ſtandard of what might be expected in future, had the war continued. The author will be compelled to allow it, unleſs he undertakes to ſhew; firſt, that the poſſeſſion of Canada, Martinico, Guadaloupe, Granada, the Havannah, the Philippines, the whole African trade, the whole Eaſt India trade, and the whole Newfoundland fiſhery, had no certain inevitable tendency to increaſe Britiſh ſhipping; unleſs, in the ſecond place, he can prove that thoſe trades were, or might by law or indulgence, be carried on in foreign veſſels: and unleſs, thirdly, he can demonſtrate that the premium of inſurance on Britiſh ſhips was riſing as the war continued. He can prove not one of theſe points. I will ſhew him a fact more, that is mortal to his aſſertions It is the ſtate of our ſhipping in 1762. The author had his reaſons for ſtopping ſhort at the preceding year. It would have appeared, had he proceeded farther, that our tonnage was in a courſe of uniform augmentation, owing to the freights derived from our foreign conqueſts, and to the perfect ſecurity of our navigation from our clear and decided ſuperiority at ſea. This, I ſay, would have appeared from the ſtate of the two years.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1761. | Britiſh, | 527,557 tons. | | Foreign, | 180,102 tons. |
| 1762. | Do | 559,537 tons. | | Do. | 129,502 tons. |

The two beſt years of the peace were in no degree equal to theſe. Much of the navigation of 1763 was alſo owing to the war; this is manifeſt from the large part of it employed in the carriage from the ceded iſlands, with which the communication

munication ſtill continued open. No ſuch circumſtances of glory and advantage ever attended upon a war. Too happy will be our lot, if we ſhould again be forced into a war, to behold any thing that ſhall reſemble them; and if we were not then the better for them, it is not in the ordinary courſe of God's providence to mend our condition.

In vain does the author declaim on the high premiums given for the loans during that war. His long note ſwelled with calculations (even ſuppoſing the moſt inaccurate of all calculations to be juſt) on that ſubject would be entirely thrown away, did it not ſerve to raiſe a wonderful opinion of his financial ſkill in thoſe who are not leſs ſurpriſed than edified, when, with a ſolemn face and myſterious air, they are told that two and two make four. For what elſe do we learn from this note? That the more expence that is incurred by a nation, the more money will be required to defray it; that, in proportion to the continuance of that expence, will be the continuance of borrowing; that the increaſe of borrowing and the increaſe of debt will go hand in hand; and laſtly, that the more money you want, the harder it will be to get it; and that the ſcarcity of the commodity will enhance the price. Who ever doubted the truth, or the inſignificance, of theſe propoſitions? what do they prove? that war is expenſive, and peace deſirable. They contain nothing more than a common-place againſt war; the eaſieſt of all topics. To bring them home to his purpoſe, he ought to have ſhewn, that our enemies had money upon better terms; which he has not ſhewn, neither can he. I ſhall ſpeak more fully to this point in another place. He ought to have ſhewn, that the money they raiſed, upon whatever terms, had procured them a more lucrative return. He knows that our expenditure purchaſed commerce and conqueſt; theirs acquired nothing but defeat and bankruptcy.

Thus the author has laid down his ideas on the ſubject of war. Next follow thoſe he entertains on that of peace. The treaty of Paris upon the whole has his approbation. Indeed, if his account of the war be juſt, he might have ſpared himſelf all further trouble. The reſt is drawn on as an inevitable concluſion. If the Houſe of Bourbon had the advantage, ſhe muſt give the law; and the peace, though it were much worſe than it is, had ſtill been a good one. But as the world is yet *deluded* on the ſtate of that war, other arguments are neceſſary; and the author has in my opinion very ill ſupplied them. He tells of many things we

have got, and of which he has made out a kind of bill. This matter may be brought within a very narrow compaſs, if we come to conſider the requiſites of a good peace under ſome plain diſtinct heads. I apprehend they may be reduced to theſe: 1. ſtability; 2. indemnification; 3. alliance.

As to the firſt, the author more than obſcurely hints in ſeveral places; that he thinks the peace not likely to laſt. However, he does furniſh a ſecurity, a ſecurity, in any light, I fear, but inſufficient; on his hypotheſis ſurely a very odd one. "By ſtipulating for the entire poſſeſſion of the conti-"nent, (ſays he) the reſtored French iſlands are become in "ſome meaſure dependent on the Britiſh empire, and the "good faith of France in obſerving the treaty is guarantied "by the value at which ſhe eſtimates their poſſeſſion" This author ſoon grows weary of his principles. They ſeldom laſt him for two pages together. When the advantages of the war were to be depreciated, then the loſs of the ultramarine colonies lightened the expences of France, facilitated her remittances, and therefore *her coloniſts put them into our hands.* According to this author's ſyſtem, the actual poſſeſſion of thoſe colonies ought to give us little or no advantage in the negociation for peace; and yet the chance of poſſeſſing them on a future occaſion gives a perfect ſecurity for the preſervation of that peace. The conqueſt of the Havannah, if it did not ſerve Spain, rather diſtreſſed England, ſays our author[f]. But the moleſtation which her galleons may ſuffer from our ſtation in Penſacola gives us advantages, for which we were not allowed to credit the nation for the Havannah itſelf; a place ſurely full as well ſituated for every external purpoſe as Penſacola, and of a little more internal benefit than ten thouſand Penſacolas.

The author ſets very little by conqueſts; I ſuppoſe it is becauſe he makes them ſo very lightly. On this ſubject he ſpeaks with the greateſt certainty imaginable. We have, according to him, nothing to do, but to go and take poſſeſſion, whenever we think proper, of the French and Spaniſh ſettlements. It were better that he had examined a little what advantage the peace gave us towards the invaſion of theſe colonies, which we did not poſſeſs before the peace.

[f] "Our merchants ſuffered by the detention of the galleons, "as their correſpondents in Spain were diſabled from paying "them for their goods ſent to America." State of the Nation, p. 7.

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It would not have been amiſs if he had conſulted the public experience, and our commanders, concerning the abſolute certainty of thoſe conqueſts on which he is pleaſed to found our ſecurity. And if, after all, he ſhould have diſcovered them to be ſo very ſure, and ſo very eaſy, he might, at leaſt, to preſerve conſiſtency, have looked a few pages back, and (no unpleaſing thing to him) liſtened to himſelf, where he ſays, "that the moſt ſucceſsful enterpriſe could not compen-"ſate to the nation for the waſte of its people, by carrying "on war in unhealthy climates." A poſition which he repeats again, p. 9. So that, according to himſelf, his ſecurity is not worth the ſuit. According to fact, he has only a chance, God knows what a chance, of getting at it. And therefore, according to reaſon, the giving up the moſt valuable of all poſſeſſions, in hopes to conquer them back, under any advantage of ſituation, is the moſt ridiculous ſecurity that ever was imagined for the peace of a nation. It is true his friends did not give up Canada; they could not give up every thing; let us make the moſt of it. We have Canada, we know its value. We have not the French any longer to fight in North America; and, from this circumſtance, we derive conſiderable advantages. But here let me reſt a little. The author touches upon a ſtring, which ſounds under his fingers but a tremulous and melancholy note.——North America was once indeed a great ſtrength to this nation, in opportunity of ports, in ſhips, in proviſions, in men. We found her a ſound, an active, a vigorous member of the empire. I hope, by wiſe management, ſhe will again become ſo. But one of our capital preſent misfortunes is, her diſcontent and diſobedience. To which of the author's favourites this diſcontent is owing, we all know but too ſufficiently.——It would be a diſmal event, if this foundation of his ſecurity, and indeed of all our public ſtrength, ſhould, in reality, become our weakneſs: and if all the powers of this empire, which ought to fall with a compacted weight upon the head of our enemies, ſhould be diſſipated and diſtracted by a jealous vigilance, or by hoſtile attempts upon one another. Ten Canadas cannot reſtore that ſecurity for the peace, and for every thing valuable to this country, which we have loſt along with the affection and the obedience of our colonies. He is the wiſe miniſter, he is the true friend to Britain, who ſhall be able to reſtore it.

To return to the ſecurity for the peace. The author tells us, that the original great purpoſes of the war were more than accompliſhed by the treaty. Surely he has experience and reading enough to know that, in the courſe of a war, events may happen, that render its original very far from being its principal purpoſe. This original may dwindle by circumſtances ſo as to become not a purpoſe of the ſecond or even the third magnitude. I truſt this is ſo obvious, that it will not be neceſſary to put caſes for its illuſtration. In that war, as ſoon as Spain entered into the quarrel, the ſecurity of North America was no longer the ſole nor the foremoſt object. The *Family compact* had been I know not how long before in agitation But then it was that we ſaw produced into day-light and action the moſt odious and moſt formidable of all the conſpiracies againſt the liberties of Europe, that ever has been framed. The war with Spain was the firſt fruits of that league; and a ſecurity againſt that league ought to have been the fundamental point of a pacification with the powers who compoſe it. We had materials in our hands to have conſtructed that ſecurity in ſuch a manner as never to be ſhaken. But how did the virtuous and able men of our author labour for this great end? They took no one ſtep towards it. On the contrary they countenanced, and indeed, as far as it depended on them, recognized it in all its parts; for our plenipotentiary treated with thoſe who acted for the two crowns, as if they had been different miniſters of the ſame monarch. The Spaniſh miniſter received his inſtructions, not from Madrid, but from Verſailles.

This was not hid from our miniſters at home, and the diſcovery ought to have alarmed them, if the good of their country had been the object of their anxiety. They could not but have ſeen that the whole Spaniſh monarchy was melted down into the cabinet of Verſailles. But they thought this circumſtance an advantage; as it enabled them to go through with their work the more expeditiouſly. Expedition was every thing to them; becauſe France might happen during a protracted negociation to diſcover the great impoſition of our victories.

In the ſame ſpirit they negociated the terms of the peace. If it were thought adviſable not to take any poſitive ſecurity from Spain, the moſt obvious principles of policy dictated that the burthen of the ceſſions ought to fall upon France; and that every thing which was of grace and favour ſhould be given to Spain. Spain could not, on her part, have executed

executed a capital article in the family compact, which obliged her to compenſate the loſſes of France. At leaſt ſhe could not do it in America; for ſhe was expreſsly precluded by the treaty of Utrecht from ceding any territory or giving any advantage in trade to that power. What did our miniſters? They took from Spain the territory of Florida, an object of no value except to ſhew our diſpoſitions to be quite equal at leaſt towards both powers; and they enabled France to compenſate Spain by the gift of Louiſiana; loading us with all the harſhneſs, leaving the act of kindneſs with France, and opening thereby a door to the fulfilling of this the moſt conſolidating article of the family compact. Accordingly that dangerous league, thus abetted and authoriſed by the Engliſh miniſtry without an attempt to invalidate it in any way, or in any of its parts, exiſts to this hour; and has grown ſtronger and ſtronger, every hour of its exiſtence.

As to the ſecond component of a good peace, *compenſation*, I have but little trouble; the author has ſaid nothing upon that head. He has nothing to ſay. After a war of ſuch expence, this ought to have been a capital conſideration. But on what he has been ſo prudently ſilent, I think it is right to ſpeak plainly. All our new acquiſitions together, at this time, ſcarce afford matter of revenue either at home or abroad, ſufficient to defray the expence of their eſtabliſhments; not one ſhilling towards the reduction of our debt. Guadaloupe or Martinico alone would have given us material aid; much in the way of duties, much in the way of trade and navigation. A good miniſtry would have conſidered how a renewal of the *Aſſiento* might have been obtained. We had as much right to aſk it at the treaty of Paris as at the treaty of Utrecht. We had incomparably more in our hands to purchaſe it. Floods of treaſure would have poured into this kingdom from ſuch a ſource; and, under proper management, no ſmall part of it would have taken a public direction, and have fructified an exhauſted exchequer.

If this gentleman's hero of finance, inſtead of flying from a treaty, which though he now defends, he could not approve, and would not oppoſe, if he, inſtead of ſhifting into an office, which removed him from the manufacture of the treaty, had, by his credit with the then great director, acquired for us theſe, or any of theſe objects, the poſſeſſion

of Guadaloupe or Martinique, or of the renewal of the *Aſſiento*, he might have held his head high in his country; becauſe he would have performed real ſervice; ten thouſand times more real ſervice, than all the œconomy of which this writer is perpetually talking, or all the little tricks of finance. which the experteſt juggler of the treaſury can practiſe, could amount to in a thouſand years. But the occaſion is loſt; the time is gone, perhaps for ever.

As to the third requiſite, *alliance*, there too the author is ſilent. What ſtrength of that kind did they acquire? They got no one new ally; they ſtript the enemy of not a ſingle old one. They diſguſted (how juſtly, or unjuſtly, matters not) every ally we had; and, from that time to this, we ſtand friendleſs in Europe. But of this naked condition of their country, I know ſome people are not aſhamed. They have their ſyſtem of politics; our anceſtors grew great by another. In this manner theſe virtuous men concluded the peace; and their practice is only conſonant to their theory.

Many things more might be obſerved on this curious head of our author's ſpeculations. But, taking leave of what the writer ſays in his ſerious part, if he be ſerious in any part, I ſhall only juſt point out a piece of his pleaſantry. No man, I believe, ever denied that the time for making peace is that in which the beſt terms may be obtained. But what that time is, together with the uſe that has been made of it, we are to judge by ſeeing whether terms, adequate to our advantages, and to our neceſſities, have been actually obtained. —— Here is the pinch of the queſtion, and to which the author ought to have ſet his ſhoulders in earneſt. Inſtead of doing this, he ſlips out of the harneſs by a jeſt; and ſneeringly tells us, that, to determine this point, we muſt know the ſecrets of the French and Spaniſh cabinets [g], and that parliament was pleaſed to

[g] Something however has tranſpired in the quarrels among thoſe concerned in that tranſaction. It ſeems the *good Genius* of Britain, ſo much vaunted by our author, did his duty nobly. Whilſt we were gaining ſuch advantages, the court of France was aſtoniſhed at our conceſſions. "J'ai apporté à Verſailles, "il eſt vrai, les ratifications du Roi d'Angleterre, *à voſtre grand* "*étonnement, et à celui de bien d'autres*, Je dois cela au bontés "du Roi d'Angleterre, à celles de Milord Bute, à Monſ. le "Comte de Viry, à Monſ. le Duc de Nivernois, et à fin, à mon "ſçavoir faire." Lettres, &c. du Chev. D'Eon, p. 51.

approve

approve the treaty of peace without calling for the correſpondence concerning it. How juſt this ſarcaſm on that parliament may be, I ſay not; but how becoming in the author, I leave it to his friends to determine.

Having thus gone through the queſtions of war and peace, the author proceeds to ſtate our debt, and the intereſt which it carried, at the time of the treaty, with the unfairneſs and inaccuracy, however, which diſtinguiſh all his aſſertions, and all his calculations. To detect every fallacy, and rectify every miſtake, would be endleſs. It will be enough to point out a few of them, in order to ſhew how unſafe it is to place any thing like an implicit truſt in ſuch a writer.

The intereſt of debt contracted during the war, is ſtated by the author at £. 2,614,892. The particulars appear in pages 14 and 16. Among them is ſtated the unfunded debt, £. 9,975,017, ſuppoſed to carry intereſt on a medium at 3 *per cent.* which amounts to £. 299,250. We are referred to the *Conſiderations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom*, p. 20, for the particulars of that unfunded debt. Turn to the work, and to the place referred to by the author himſelf, if you have a mind to ſee a clear detection of a capital fallacy of this article in his account. You will there ſee that this unfunded debt conſiſts of the nine following articles; the remaining ſubſidy to the duke of Brunſwick; the remaining *dedommagement* to the landgrave of Heſſe; the German demands; the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the deficiencies of grants and funds; Mr. Touchit's claim; the debt due to Nova Scotia and Barbadoes; Exchequer bills; and Navy debt. The extreme fallacy of this ſtate cannot eſcape any reader who will be at the pains to compare the intereſt money, with which he affirms us to have been loaded, in his *State of the Nation*, with the items of the principal debt to which he refers in his *Conſiderations*. The reader muſt obſerve, that of this long liſt of nine articles, only two, the Exchequer bills, and part of the Navy debt, carried any intereſt at all. The firſt amounted to £. 1,800,000; and this undoubtedly carried intereſt. The whole Navy debt indeed amounted to £. 4,576,915; but of this only a *part* carried intereſt. The author of the *Conſiderations*, &c. labours to prove this very point in p. 16; and Mr. G. has always defended himſelf upon the ſame ground, for the inſufficient proviſion he

made for the diſcharge of that debt. The reader may ſee their own authority for it [h].

Mr. G. did in fact provide no more than £. 2,150,000, for the diſcharge of theſe bills in two years. It is much to be wiſhed that theſe gentlemen would lay their heads together, that they would conſider well this matter, and agree upon ſomething. For when the ſcanty proviſion made for the unfunded debt is to be vindicated, then we are told it is a very *ſmall part* of that debt which carries intereſt. But when the public ſtate is to be repreſented in a miſerable condition, and the conſequences of the late war to be laid before us in dreadful colours, then we are to be told that the unfunded debt is within a trifle of ten millions, and ſo large a portion of it carries intereſt that we muſt not compute leſs than 3 *per cent.* upon the *whole*.

In the year 1764, parliament voted £. 650,000, towards the diſcharge of the navy debt. This ſum could not be applied ſolely to the diſcharge of bills carrying intereſt: becauſe part of the debt due on ſeamens wages muſt have been paid, and ſome bills carried no intereſt at all. Notwithſtanding this, we find by an account in the Journals of the H. of C. in the following ſeſſion, that the navy debt carrying intereſt was on the 31ſt of December, 1764, no more

[h] "The navy bills are not due till ſix months after they have "been iſſued; ſix months alſo of the ſeamens wages by act of "parliament muſt be, and, in conſequence of the rules preſcri-"bed by that act, twelve months wages generally, and often "much more, are retained; and there has been beſides at all "times a large arrear of pay, which, though kept in the ac-"count, could never be claimed, the perſons to whom it was "due having left neither aſſignees nor repreſentatives. The pre-"ciſe amount of ſuch ſums cannot be aſcertained; but they can "hardly be reckoned leſs than 13 or 14 hundred thouſand "pounds. On 31ſt Dec. 1754, when the navy debt was redu-"ced nearly as low as it could be, it ſtill amounted to 1,296,567*l.* "18*s.* 11 ¾*d.* conſiſting chiefly of articles which could not then "be diſcharged; ſuch articles will be larger now, in proportion "to the encreaſe of the eſtabliſhment; and an allowance muſt "always be made for them in judging of the ſtate of the navy "debt, though they are diſtinguiſhable in the account. In pro-"viding for that which is payable, the principal object of the "legiſlature is always to diſcharge the bills, for they are the "greateſt article; they bear an intereſt of 4 *per cent.*; and, "when the quantity of them is large, they are a heavy incum-"brance upon all money tranſactions."

than

than £. 1,687,442. I am ſure therefore that I admit too much when I admit the navy debt carrying intereſt, after the creation of the navy annuities in the year 1763, to have been £. 2,200,000. Add the exchequer bills, and the whole unfunded debt carrying intereſt will be four millions, inſtead of ten; and the annual intereſt paid for it at 4 *per cent.* will be £. 160,000 inſtead of £. 299,250. An error of no ſmall magnitude, and which could not have been owing to inadvertency.

The miſrepreſentation of the encreaſe of the peace eſtabliſhment is ſtill more extraordinary than that of the intereſt on the unfunded debt. The encreaſe is great undoubtedly. However, the author finds no fault with it, and urges it only as a matter of argument to ſupport the ſtrange chimerical propoſals he is to make us in the cloſe of his work for the encreaſe of revenue. The greater he made that eſtabliſhment, the ſtronger he expected to ſtand in argument: but, whatever he expected or propoſed, he ſhould have ſtated the matter fairly. He tells us that this eſtabliſhment is near £. 1,500,000 more than it was in 1752, 1753, and other years of peace. This he has done in his uſual manner, by aſſertion, without troubling himſelf either with proof or probability. For he has not given us any ſtate of the peace eſtabliſhment in the years 1753 and 1754, the time which he means to compare with the preſent. As I am obliged to force him to that preciſion, from which he always flies as from his moſt dangerous enemy, I have been at the trouble to ſearch the Journals in the period between the two laſt wars: and I find that the peace eſtabliſhment, conſiſting of the navy, the ordnance, and the ſeveral incidental expences, amounted to £. 2,346,594. Now is this writer wild enough to imagine, that the peace eſtabliſhment of 1764, and the ſubſequent years, made up from the ſame articles, is £. 3,800,000 and upwards? His aſſertion however goes to this. But I muſt take the liberty of correcting him in this groſs miſtake, and from an authority he cannot refuſe, from his favourite work, and ſtanding authority, the Conſiderations. We find there, in p. 39[1], the

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Navy, | 1,450,900 |
| Army, | 1,268,500 |
| Ordnance, | 174,600 |
| The four American Governments, | 19,200 |
| Carried over, | £. 2,913,200 |

[1]

the peace eſtabliſhment of 1764 and 1765 ſtated at £. 3,609,700. This is near two hundred thouſand pounds leſs than that given in the State of the Nation. But even from this, in order to render the articles which compoſe the peace eſtabliſhment in the two periods correſpondent (for otherwiſe they cannot be compared), we muſt deduct firſt, his articles of the deficiency of land and malt, which amount to £. 300,000. They certainly are no part of the eſtabliſhment, nor are they included in that ſum, which I have ſtated above for the eſtabliſhment in the time of the former peace. If they were proper to be ſtated at all, they ought to be ſtated in both accounts. We muſt alſo deduct the deficiencies of funds £.202,400. Theſe deficiencies are the difference between the intereſt charged on the public for monies borrowed, and the produce of the taxes laid for the diſcharge of that intereſt. Annual proviſion is indeed to be made for them by parliament: but in the enquiry before us, which is only what charge is brought on the public by intereſt paid or to be paid for money borrowed, the utmoſt that the author ſhould do is to bring into the account the full intereſt for all that money. This he has done in page 13, and he repeats it in p. 15, the very page I am now examining, £. 2,614,892. To comprehend afterwards in the peace eſtabliſhment the deficiency of the fund created for payment of that intereſt, would be laying twice to the account of the war part of the ſame ſum. Suppoſe ten millions, borrowed at 4 *per cent.* and the fund for payment of the intereſt to produce no more than £. 200,000. The whole annual charge on the public is £ 400,000. It can be no more. But to charge the intereſt in one part of the account, and then the deficiency in the other, would be charging £. 600,000. The deficiency of funds muſt therefore be alſo deducted from the peace

| | |
|---|---|
| Brought over, | £. 2,913,200 |
| General Surveys in America, | 1,600 |
| Foundling Hoſpital, | 38,000 |
| To the African Committee, | 13,000 |
| For the Civil Eſtabliſhment on the Coaſt of Africa, | 5,500 |
| Militia, | 100,000 |
| Deficiency of Land and Malt, | 300,000 |
| Deficiency of Funds, | 202,400 |
| Extraordinaries of the Army and Navy, | 35,000 |
| Total, | £. 3,608,700 |

eſta-

eſtabliſhment in the Conſiderations; and then the peace eſtabliſhment in that author will be reduced to the ſame articles with thoſe included in the ſum I have already mentioned for the peace eſtabliſhment before the laſt war, in the year 1753, and 1754.

| | | £. |
|---|---|---|
| Peace eſtabliſhment in the Conſiderations, | | 3,609,700 |
| Deduct deficiency of land and malt, | 300,000 | |
| Ditto of funds, —— | 202,400 | |
| | | 502,400 |
| | | 3,107,300 |
| Peace eſtabliſhment before the late war, in which no deficiencies of land and malt, or funds, are included, —— | | 2,346,594 |
| | Difference, £. | 760,706 |

Being about half the ſum which our author has been pleaſed to ſuppoſe it. Let us put the whole together. The author ſtates,

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Difference of peace eſtabliſhment before and ſince the war, —— —— | 1,500,000 |
| Intereſt of debt contracted by the war, | 2,614,892 |
| | 4,114,892 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The *real* difference in the peace eſtabliſhment is, —— | 760,706 | |
| The actual intereſt of the funded debt, including that charged on the ſinking fund, is, —— | 2,315,642 | |
| The actual intereſt of unfunded debt at moſt, —— | 160,000 | |
| Total intereſt of debt contracted by the war, —— | | 2,475,642 |
| Increaſe of peace eſtabliſhment, and intereſt of the new debt, —— —— | | 3,236,348 |
| | Error of the author, £. | 878,544 |

It

It is true the extraordinaries of the army have been found conſiderably greater than the author of the Conſiderations was pleaſed to foretel they would be. The author of the Preſent State avails himſelf of that increaſe, and, finding it ſuit his purpoſe, ſets the whole down in the peace eſtabliſhment of the preſent times. If this is allowed him, his error perhaps may be reduced to £. 700,000. But I doubt the author of the Conſiderations will not thank him for admitting £. 200,000, and upwards, as the peace-eſtabliſhment for extraordinaries, when that author has ſo much laboured to confine them within £. 35,000.

Theſe are ſome of the capital fallacies of the author. To break the thread of my diſcourſe as little as poſſible, I have thrown into the notes ſome inſtances, though God knows far from the whole, of his inaccuracies, inconſiſtencies, and want of common care. I think myſelf obliged to take ſome notice of them, in order to take off from any authority this writer may have; and to put an end to the deference which careleſs men are apt to pay to one who boldly arrays his accounts, and marſhals his figures, in perfect confidence that their correctneſs will never be examined[k].

How-

[k] Upon the money borrowed in 1760, the premium of 1 *per cent.* was for 21 years, not for 20; this annuity has been paid 8 years inſtead of 7; the ſum paid is therefore £. 640,000 inſtead of £. 560,000; the remaining term is worth 10 years and a quarter, inſtead of 11 years *; its value is £. 820,000, inſtead of £. 880,000; and the whole value of that premium is £. 1,460,000 inſtead of £. 1,440,000. The like errors are obſervable in his computation on the additional capital of 3 *per cent.* on the loan of that year. In like manner, on the loan of 1762, the author computes on 5 years payments inſtead of 6; and ſays in expreſs terms, that take 5 from 19, and there remain 13. Theſe are not errors of the pen or the preſs; the ſeveral computations purſued in this part of the work with great diligence and earneſtneſs prove them errors upon much deliberation. Thus the premiums in 1759 are caſt up £. 90,000 too little, an error in the firſt rule of arithmetic. "The annuities borrowed in 1756 and "1758 are," ſays he, "to continue till redeemed by parlia-"ment." He does not take notice that the firſt are irredeemable till February 1771, the other till July 1782. In this the amount of the premiums is computed on the time which they have run. Weakly and ignorantly; for he might have added to this and ſtrengthened his argument, ſuch as it is, by charging alſo

* See Smart and Demoivre.

However, for argument, I am content to take his ſtate of it. The debt was and is enormous. The war was expenſive. The beſt œconomy had not perhaps been uſed. But I muſt obſerve, that war and œconomy are things not eaſily reconciled; and that the attempt of leaning towards parſimony in ſuch a ſtate may be the worſt management, and in the end the worſt œconomy in the world, hazarding the total loſs of all the charge incurred, and of every thing elſe along with it.

But *cui bono* all this detail of our debt? Has the author given a ſingle light towards any material reduction of it? Not a glimmering. We ſhall ſee in its place what ſort of thing he propoſes. But before he commences his operations, in order to ſcare the public imagination, he raiſes by art magic a thick miſt before our eyes, through which glare the moſt ghaſtly and horrible phantoms:

*Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebraſque neceſſe eſt,*
*Non radii ſolis, neque lucida tela diei*
*Diſcutiant, ſed naturæ ſpecies ratioque.*

Let us therefore calmly, if we can for the fright into which he has put us, appreciate thoſe dreadful and deformed gorgons and hydras, which inhabit the joyleſs regions of an imagination, fruitful in nothing but the production of monſters.

His whole repreſentation is founded on the ſuppoſed operation of our debt, upon our manufactures, and our trade. To this cauſe he attributes a certain ſuppoſed dearneſs of the neceſſaries of life, which muſt compel our manufacturers to emigrate to cheaper countries, particularly to France, and with them the manufacture. Thence conſumption declining, and with it revenue. He will not permit the real balance of our trade to be eſtimated ſo high as £. 2,500,000, and the intereſt of the debt to foreigners carries off

alſo the additional 1 *per cent.* from the day on which he wrote to at leaſt that day on which theſe annuities become redeemable. To make ample amends, however, he has added to the premiums of 15 *per cent* in 1759, and 3 *per cent.* in 1760, the annuity paid for them ſince their commencement; the fallacy of which is manifeſt: for the premiums in theſe caſes can be neither more or leſs than the additional capital for which the public ſtands engaged, and is juſt the ſame whether 5 or 500 years annuity has been paid for it. In private life, no man perſuades himſelf that he has borrowed £. 200, becauſe he happens to have paid 20 years intereſt on loan of £. 100.

£. 1,500,000

£. 1,500,000 of that balance. That France is not in the ſame condition. Then follow his wailings and lamentings, which he renews over and over, according to his cuſtom — a declining trade, and decreaſing ſpecie — on the point of becoming tributary to France — of loſing Ireland — of having the colonies torn away from us.

The firſt thing upon which I ſhall obſerve is, what he takes for granted as the cleareſt of all propoſitions, the emigration of our manufacturers to France. I undertake to ſay that this aſſertion is totally groundleſs, and I challenge the author to bring any ſort of proof of it. If living is cheaper in France, that is, to be had for leſs ſpecie, wages are proportionably lower. No manufacturer, let the living be what it will, was ever known to fly for refuge, to low wages. Money is the firſt thing which attracts him. Accordingly our wages attract artificers from all parts of the world. From two ſhillings to one ſhilling, is a fall, in all mens imaginations, which no calculation upon a difference in the price of the neceſſaries of life can compenſate. But it will be hard to prove, that a French artificer is better fed, cloathed, lodged, and warmed, than one in England; for that is the ſenſe, and the only ſenſe, of living cheaper. If, in truth and fact, our artificer fares as well in all theſe reſpects, as one in the ſame ſtate in France — how ſtands the matter in point of opinion and prejudice, the ſprings by which people in that claſs of life are chiefly actuated? The idea of our common people, concerning French living, is dreadful; altogether as dreadful as our author's can poſſibly be of the ſtate of his own country; a way of thinking that will hardly ever prevail on them to deſert to France [1].

But, leaving the author's ſpeculations, the fact is, they have not deſerted; and of courſe the manufacture cannot be departed, or departing, with them. I am not indeed able to get at all the details of all our manufacture; though, I think, I have taken full as much pains for that purpoſe as our author. Some I have by me; and they do not hitherto, thank God, ſupport the author's complaint, unleſs a vaſt increaſe of the quantity of goods manufactured, be a proof of loſing the manufacture. On a view of the regiſ-

[1] In a courſe of years a few manufacturers have been tempted abroad, not by cheap living, but by immenſe premiums, to ſet up as maſters, and to introduce the manufacture. This muſt happen in every country eminent for the ſkill of its artificers, and has nothing to do with taxes and the price of proviſion.

ters

ters in the Weſt-riding of Yorkſhire, for three years before the war, and for the three laſt, it appears, that the quantities of cloths entered were as follow:

| | Pieces broad. | Pieces narrow. |
|---|---|---|
| 1752. | 60,724 | 72,442 |
| 1753. | 55,358 | 71,618 |
| 1754. | 56,070 | 72,394 |
| | 172,152 | 216,454 |

| | Pieces broad. | Pieces narrow. |
|---|---|---|
| 1765. | 54,660 | 77,419 |
| 1766. | 72,575 | 78,893 |
| 1767. | 102,428 | 78,819 |
| 3 years, ending 1767, | 229,663 | 235,131 |
| 3 years, ending 1754, | 172,152 | 216,454 |
| Encreaſe, | 57,511 | Encreaſe, 18,677 |

In this manner this capital branch of manufacture has encreaſed, under the encreaſe of taxes; and this not from a declining, but from a greatly flouriſhing period of commerce. I may ſay the ſame on the beſt authority of the fabrick of thin goods at Halifax; of the bays at Rochdale; and of that infinite variety of admirable manufactures that grow and extend every year among the ſpirited, inventive, and enterprizing traders of Mancheſter.

A trade ſometimes ſeems to periſh when it only aſſumes a different form. Thus the coarſeſt woollens were formerly exported in great quantities to Ruſſia. The Ruſſians now ſupply themſelves with theſe goods. But the export thither of finer cloths has encreaſed in proportion, as the other has declined. Poſſibly ſome parts of the kingdom may have felt ſomething like a languor in buſineſs. Objects like trade and manufacture, which the very attempt to confine would certainly deſtroy, frequently change their place; and thereby, far from being loſt, are often highly improved. Thus ſome manufactures have decayed in the weſt and ſouth, which have made new and more vigorous ſhoots when tranſplanted into the north. And here it is impoſſible to paſs by, though the author has ſaid nothing upon it, the vaſt addition to the maſs of Britiſh trade, which has been made

made by the improvement of Scotland. What does he think of the commerce of the city of Glaſgow, and of the manufactures of Paiſley and all the adjacent county? Has this any thing like the deadly aſpect and *facies Hippocratica* which the falſe diagnoſtic of our ſtate phyſician has given to our trade in general? Has he not heard of the iron works of ſuch magnitude even in their cradle which are ſet up on the Carron, which at the ſame time have drawn nothing from Sheffield, Birmingham, or Wolverhampton?

This might perhaps be enough to ſhew the entire falſity of the complaint concerning the decline of our manufactures. But every ſtep we advance, this matter clears up more and more; and the falſe terrors of the author are diſſipated, and fade away as the light appears. "The trade "and manufactures of this country (ſays he) going to ruin, "and a diminution of our *revenue from conſumption* muſt "attend the loſs of ſo many ſeamen, and artificers." Nothing more true than the general obſervation: nothing more falſe than its application to our circumſtances. Let the revenue on conſumption ſpeak for itſelf:

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Average of nett exciſe, ſince the new duties, 3 years ending 1767, | 4,590,734 |
| Ditto for 3 years before the new duties, 3 years ending 1759, | 3,261,694 |
| Average encreaſe, | £. 1,329,040 |

Here is no diminution. Here is, on the contrary, an immenſe increaſe. This is owing, I ſhall be told, to the new duties, which may increaſe the total bulk; but at the ſame time may make ſome diminution of the produce of the old. Were this the fact, it would be far from ſupporting the author's complaint. It might have proved that the burthen lay rather too heavy; but it would never prove that the *revenue from conſumption* was impaired, which was his buſineſs to do. But what is the real fact? Let us take, as the beſt inſtance for the purpoſe, the produce of the old hereditary and temporary exciſe granted in the reign of Charles the Second, whoſe object is that of moſt of the new impoſitions, from two averages, each of 8 years.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Average, firſt period, 8 years, ending 1754, | 525,317 |
| Ditto, ſecond period, 8 years, ending in 1767, | 538,542 |
| Encreaſe, | £. 13,225 |

I have

I have taken theſe averages as including in each, a war and a peace period; the firſt before the impoſition of the new duties, the other ſince thoſe impoſitions; and ſuch is the ſtate of the oldeſt branch of the revenue from conſumption. Beſides the acquiſition of ſo much new, this article, to ſpeak of no other, has rather encreaſed under the preſſure of all thoſe additional taxes to which the author is pleaſed to attribute its deſtruction. But as the author has made his grand effort againſt thoſe moderate, judicious, and neceſſary levies, which ſupport all the dignity, the credit, and the power of his country, the reader will excuſe a little further detail on this ſubject; that we may ſee how little oppreſſive thoſe taxes are on the ſhoulders of the public, with which he labours ſo earneſtly to load its imagination. For this purpoſe we take the ſtate of that ſpecific article upon which the two capital burthens of the war leaned the moſt immediately, by the additional duties on malt, and upon beer:

| | |
|---|---|
| Average of ſtrong beer, brewed in 8 years before the additional malt and beer duties, | 3,895,059 Bar. |
| Average of ſtrong beer, 8 years ſince the duties, | 4,060,726 Bar. |
| Encreaſe in the laſt period, | 165,667 Bar. |

Here is the effect of two ſuch daring taxes as 3 *d.* by the buſhel additional on malt, and 3 *s.* by the barrel additional on beer. Two impoſitions laid without remiſſion one upon the neck of the other; and laid upon an object which before had been immenſely loaded. They did not in the leaſt impair the conſumption: it has grown under them. It appears that, upon the whole, the people did not feel ſo much inconvenience from the new duties as to oblige them to take refuge in the private brewery. Quite the contrary happened in both theſe reſpects in the reign of king William; and it happened from much ſlighter impoſitions [1]. No people can long conſume a commodity for which they are not well able to pay. An



[1] Although the public brewery has conſiderably encreaſed in this latter period, the produce of the malt tax has been ſomething leſs than in the former; this cannot be attributed to the new malt tax. Had this been the cauſe of the leſſened conſumption, the public brewery, ſo much more burthened, muſt have felt it more. The cauſe of this diminution of the malt tax, I take to have been principally owing to the greater dearneſs of corn in the ſecond period than the firſt, which, in all its conſequences, affected the people in the country much more than thoſe in the towns. But the revenue

enlightened reader laughs at the inconſiſtent chimera of our author, of a people univerſally luxurious, and at the ſame time oppreſſed with taxes and declining in trade. For my part, I cannot look on theſe duties as the author does. He ſees nothing but the burthen. I can perceive the burthen as well as he; but I cannot avoid contemplating alſo the ſtrength that ſupports it. From thence I draw the moſt comfortable aſſurances of the future vigour, and the ample reſources, of this great miſrepreſented country; and can never prevail on myſelf to make complaints which have no cauſe, in order to raiſe hopes which have no foundation.

When a repreſentation is built on truth and nature, one member ſupports the other, and mutual lights are given and received from every part. Thus, as our manufacturers have not deſerted, nor the manufacture left us, nor the conſumption declined, nor the revenue ſunk, ſo neither has trade, which is at once the reſult, meaſure, and cauſe of the whole, in the leaſt decayed, as our author has thought proper ſometimes to affirm, conſtantly to ſuppoſe, as if it were the moſt indiſputable of all propoſitions. The reader will ſee below the comparative ſtate of our trade in three of the beſt years before our encreaſe of debt and taxes, and with it the three laſt years ſince the author's date of our ruin [m].

In the laſt three years the whole of our exports was between 44 and 45 millions. In the three years preceding the war, it was no more than from 35 to 36 millions. The average balance of the former period was £. 3,706,000; of the latter, ſomething above four millions. It is true, that whilſt the impreſſions of the author's deſtructive war continued, our trade was greater than it is at preſent. One of the neceſſary conſequences of the peace was, that France muſt gradually recover a part of thoſe markets of which ſhe had been originally in poſſeſſion. However, after all theſe deductions, ſtill the groſs trade in the worſt year of the preſent is better than in the

nue from conſumption was not on the whole impaired, as we have ſeen in the foregoing page.

[m]

| | Total imports, value, | Exports, ditto. |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £. |
| 1752. | 7,889,369 | 11,694,912 |
| 1753. | 8,625,029 | 12,243,604 |
| 1754. | 8,093,472 | 11,787,828 |
| Total, | £. 24,607,870 | 35,726,344 |
| | | 24,607,870 |
| Exports exceed imports, | | 11,118,474 |
| Medium balance, | | £. 3,706,158 |

1764.

the beſt year of any former period of peace. A very great part of our taxes, if not the greateſt, has been impoſed ſince the beginning of this century. On the author's principles, this continual encreaſe of taxes muſt have ruined our trade, or at leaſt entirely checked its growth. But I have a manuſcript of Davenant, which contains an abſtract of our trade for the years 1703 and 1704; by which it appears, that the whole export from England did not then exceed £. 6,552, 19. It is now conſiderably more than double that amount. Yet England was then a rich and flouriſhing nation.

The author endeavours to derogate from the balance in our favour as it ſtands on the entries, and reduces it from 4 millions as it there appears to no more than £. 2,500,000. His obſervation on the looſeneſs and inaccuracy of the export entries is juſt; and that the error is always an error of exceſs, I readily admit. But becauſe, as uſual, he has wholly omitted ſome very material facts, his concluſion is as erroneous as the entries he complains of.

On this point of the cuſtom-houſe entries I ſhall make a few obſervations. 1ſt, The inaccuracy of theſe entries can extend only to FREE GOODS, that is, to ſuch Britiſh products and manufactures, as are exported without drawback and without bounty; which do not in general amount to more than two thirds at the very utmoſt of the whole export even of *our home products*. The valuable articles of corn, malt, leather, hops, beer, and many others, do not come under this objection of inaccuracy. The article of CERTIFICATE GOODS re exported, a vaſt branch of our commerce, admits of no error (except ſome ſmaller frauds which cannot be eſtimated), as they have all a drawback of duty, and the exporter muſt therefore correctly ſpecify their quantity and kind. The author therefore is not warranted from the known error in ſome of the entries, to make a general defalcation from the whole balance in our favour. This error cannot affect more than half, if ſo much, of the export

 article.

| | £. | £. |
|---|---|---|
| 1764. | 10,319,946 | 16,164,532 |
| 1765. | 10,889,742 | 14,550,507 |
| 1766. | 11,475,825 | 14,024,964 |
| Total, | £. 32,685,513 | 44,740,003 |
| | | 32,685,513 |
| Exports exceed, | | 12,054,490 |
| Medium balance for 3 laſt years, | | £. 4,018,163 |

article. 2dly, In the account made up at the inſpector general's office, they eſtimate only the original coſt of Britiſh products as they are here purchaſed; and on foreign goods, only the prices in the country from whence they are ſent. This was the method eſtabliſhed by Mr. Davenant; and, as far as it goes, it certainly is a good one. But the profits of the merchant at home, and of our factories abroad, are not taken into the account: which profit on ſuch an immenſe quantity of goods exported and re exported cannot fail of being very great; five *per cent.* upon the whole, I ſhould think a very moderate allowance. 3dly, It does not comprehend the advantage ariſing from the employment of 600000 tons of ſhipping, which muſt be paid by the foreign conſumer, and which, in many bulky articles of commerce, is equal to the value of the commodity. This can ſcarcely be rated at leſs than a million annually. 4thly, The whole import from Ireland and America, and from the Weſt Indies, is ſet againſt us in the ordinary way of ſtriking a balance of imports and exports; whereas the import and export are both our own. This is juſt as ridiculous, as to put againſt the general balance of the nation, how much more goods Cheſhire receives from London, than London from Cheſhire. The whole revolves and circulates through this kingdom, and is, ſo far as it regards our profit, in the nature of home trade, as much as if the ſeveral countries of America and Ireland were all pieced to Cornwall. The courſe of exchange with all theſe places is fully ſufficient to demonſtrate that this kingdom has the whole advantage of their commerce. When the final profit upon a whole ſyſtem of trade reſts and centers in a certain place, a balance ſtruck in that place merely on the mutual ſale of commodities is quite fallacious. 5thly, The cuſtom-houſe entries furniſh a moſt defective, and indeed ridiculous idea, of the moſt valuable branch of trade we have in the world, that with Newfoundland. Obſerve what you export thither; a little ſpirits, proviſion, fiſhing lines, and fiſhing hooks Is this *export* the true idea of the Newfoundland trade in the light of a beneficial branch of commerce? nothing leſs. Examine our *imports* from thence; it ſeems, upon this vulgar idea of exports and imports, to turn the balance againſt you. But your exports to Newfoundland are your own goods. Your import is your own food; as much your own, as that you raiſe with your ploughs out of your own ſoil; and not your loſs, but your gain; your riches, not your poverty. But ſo fallacious is this way of judging, that neither the export nor import, nor both

both together, ſupply any idea approaching to, adequate of that branch of buſineſs. The veſſels in that trade go ſtrait from Newfoundland to the foreign market; and the ſale there, not the import here, is the meaſure of its value. That trade which is one of your greateſt and beſt is hardly ſo much as ſeen in the cuſtom-houſe entries; and it is not of leſs annual value to this nation than £. 400,000. 6thly, The quality of your imports muſt be conſidered as well as the quantity. To ſtate the whole of the foreign import *as loſs*, is exceedingly abſurd. All the iron, hemp, flax, cotton, Spaniſh wool, raw ſilk, woollen and linen yarn, which we import, are by no means to be conſidered, as the matter of a merely luxurious conſumption; which is the idea too generally and looſely annexed to our import article. Theſe above-mentioned are materials of induſtry, not of luxury, which are wrought up here, in many inſtances, to ten times, and more, of their original value. Even where they are not ſubſervient to our exports, they ſtill add to our internal wealth, which conſiſts in the ſtock of uſeful commodities, as much as in gold and ſilver. In looking over the ſpecific articles of our export and import, I have often been aſtoniſhed for how ſmall a part of the ſupply of our conſumption, either luxurious or convenient, we are indebted to nations properly foreign to us.

Theſe conſiderations are entirely paſſed over by the author; they have been but too much neglected by moſt who have ſpeculated on this ſubject. But they ought never to be omitted by thoſe who mean to come to any thing like the true ſtate of the Britiſh trade. They compenſate, and they more than compenſate, every thing which the author can cut off with any appearance of reaſon for the over-entry of Britiſh goods; and they reſtore to us that balance of four millions, which the author has thought proper on ſuch a very poor and limited comprehenſion of the object to reduce to £. 2,500,000.

In general this author is ſo circumſtanced, that to ſupport his theory he is obliged to aſſume his facts; and then, if you allow his facts, they will not ſupport his concluſions. What if all he ſays of the ſtate of this balance were true? did not the ſame objections always lie to cuſtom-houſe entries? do they defalcate more from the entries of 1766 than from thoſe of 1754? If they prove us ruined, we were always ruined. Some ravens have always indeed croaked out this kind of ſong. They have a malignant delight in preſaging miſchief when they are not employed in doing it: they are miſerable and

diſappointed at every inſtance of the public proſperity. They overlook us like the malevolent being of the poet:

*Tritonida conſpicit arcem*
*Ingeniis, opibuſque, et feſta pace virentem;*
*Vixque tenet lacrymas quia nil lacrymabile vidit.*

It is in this ſpirit that ſome have looked upon thoſe accidents, that caſt an occaſional damp upon trade. Their imaginations entail theſe accidents upon us in perpetuity. We have had ſome bad harveſts. This muſt very diſadvantageouſly affect the balance of trade, and the navigation of a people, ſo large a part of whoſe commerce is in grain. But, in knowing the cauſe, we are morally certain, that, according to the courſe of events, it cannot long ſubſiſt. In the three laſt years we have exported ſcarcely any grain; in good years that export hath been worth twelve hundred thouſand pounds and more; in the two laſt years, far from exporting, we have been obliged to import to the amount perhaps of our former exportation. So that in this article the balance muſt be £. 2,000,000 againſt us; that is, one million in the ceaſing of gain, the other in the increaſe of expenditure. But none of the author's promiſes or projects could have prevented this misfortune; and, thank God, we do not want him or them to relieve us from it; although, if his friends ſhould now come into power, I doubt not but they will be ready to take credit for any encreaſe of trade or exciſe, that may ariſe from the happy circumſtance of a good harveſt.

This connects with his loud laments and melancholy prognoſtications concerning the high price of the neceſſaries of life and the products of labour. With all his others I deny this fact; and I again call upon him to prove it. Take average and not accident, the grand and firſt neceſſary of life is cheap in this country; and that too as weighed, not againſt labour, which is its true counterpoiſe, but againſt money. Does he call the price of wheat at this day, between 32 and 40 ſhillings *per* quarter in London, dear [n]? He muſt know that fuel (an object of the higheſt order in the neceſſaries of life, and of the firſt neceſſity in almoſt every kind of manufacture) is in many of our provinces cheaper than in any part of the globe. Meat is on the whole not exceſſively dear, whatever its price may be at particular times and from particular accidents. If it has had any thing like an uniform riſe, this enhancement may eaſily be proved not to be owing to the encreaſe of taxes, but to uniform encreaſe of conſumpti-

[n] It is dearer in ſome places, and rather cheaper in others; but it muſt ſoon all come to a level.

on

on and of money. Diminiſh the latter, and meat in your markets will be ſufficiently cheap in account, but much dearer in effect; becauſe fewer will be in a condition to buy. Thus your apparent plenty will be real indigence. At preſent, even under temporary diſadvantages, the uſe of fleſh is greater here than any where elſe; it is continued without any interruption of Lents or meagre days; it is ſuſtained and growing even with the encreaſe of our taxes But ſome have the art of converting even the ſigns of national proſperity into ſymptoms of decay and ruin. And our author, who ſo loudly diſclaims popularity, never fails to lay hold of the moſt vulgar popular prejudices and humours, in hopes to captivate the crowd. Even thoſe peeviſh diſpoſitions, which grow out of ſome tranſitory ſuffering, thoſe paſſing clouds which float in our changeable atmoſphere, are by him induſtriouſly figured into frightful ſhapes, in order firſt to terrify and then to govern the populace.

It was not enough for the author's purpoſe to give this falſe and diſcouraging picture of the ſtate of his own country. It did not fully anſwer his end, to exaggerate her burthens, to depreciate her ſucceſſes, and to vilify her character. Nothing had been done unleſs the ſituation of France were exalted in proportion as that of England had been abaſed. The reader will excuſe the citation I make at length from his book; he outdoes himſelf upon this occaſion. His confidence is indeed unparalleled, and altogether of the heroic caſt.

" If our rival nations were in the ſame circumſtances " with ourſelves, the *augmentation of our Taxes would pro-* " *duce no ill conſequences:* if we were obliged to raiſe our " prices, they muſt, from the ſame cauſes, do the like, and " could take no advantage by under-ſelling and under-work- " ing us. But the alarming conſideration to Great-Britain " is, *that France is not in the ſame condition.* Her diſtreſſes, " during the war, were great, but they were immediate; " her want of credit, as has been ſaid, compelled her to " impoveriſh her people by raiſing the greateſt part of her " ſupplies within the year; *but the burdens ſhe impoſed on* " *them were, in a great meaſure, temporary, and muſt be* " *greatly diminiſhed by a few years of peace.* She could " procure no conſiderable loans, therefore ſhe has mortgag- " ed no *ſuch oppreſſive taxes as thoſe of Great Britain has* " *impoſed in perpetuity for payment of intereſt.* Peace muſt, " therefore, ſoon re-eſtabliſh her commerce and manufac- " tures, eſpecially as the comparative *lightneſs of taxes*, and " the cheapneſs of living, in that country, muſt make

"France an aſylum for Britiſh manufactures and artificers." On this the author reſts the merits of his whole ſyſtem. And on this point I will join iſſue with him. If France is not at leaſt in the *ſame condition*, even in that very condition which the author falſely repreſents to be ours, if the very reverſe of his propoſition be not true, then I will admit his State of the Nation to be juſt; and all his inferences from that ſtate to be logical and concluſive. It is not ſurprizing, that the author ſhould hazard our opinion of his veracity. That is a virtue on which great ſtateſmen do not perhaps pique themſelves ſo much: but it is ſomewhat extraordinary, that he ſhould ſtake on a very poor calculation of chances, all credit for care, for accuracy, and for knowledge of the ſubject of which he treats. He is raſh and inaccurate, becauſe he thinks he writes to a public ignorant and inattentive. But he may find himſelf in that reſpect, as in many others, greatly miſtaken.

In order to contraſt the light and vigorous condition of France with that of England, weak and ſinking under her burthens, he ſtates in his 10th page, that France had raiſed £. 50,314,378 ſterling *by taxes within the ſeveral years* from the year 1756 to 1762 both incluſive. An Engliſhman muſt ſtand aghaſt at ſuch a repreſentation: To find France able to *raiſe within the year* ſums little inferior to all that we were able even to *borrow* on intereſt with all the reſources of the greateſt and moſt eſtabliſhed credit in the world! Europe was filled with aſtoniſhment when they ſaw England *borrow* in one year twelve millions. It was thought, and very juſtly, no ſmall proof of national ſtrength and financial ſkill to find a fund for the payment of the intereſt upon this ſum. The intereſt of this, computed with the one *per cent.* annuities, amounted only to £. 600,000 a year. This, I ſay, was thought a ſurprizing effort even of credit. But this author talks, as of a thing not worth proving, and but juſt worth obſerving, that France in one year raiſed ſixteen times that ſum without borrowing, and continued to raiſe ſums not far from equal to it for ſeveral years together? Suppoſe ſome Jacob Henriques had propoſed, in the year 1762, to prevent a perpetual charge on the nation by raiſing ten millions within the year. He would be conſidered not as a harſh financier who laid an heavy hand on the public; but as a poor viſionary, who had run mad on ſupplies and taxes. They who know that the whole land tax of England at 4 *s.* in the pound, raiſes but two millions; will not eaſily apprehend that any ſuch ſums as the author has conjured up can be raiſed even in the moſt opulent nations. France owed a large debt,

debt, and was incumbered with heavy eſtabliſhments, before that war. The author does not formally deny that ſhe borrowed ſomething in every year of its continuance; let him produce the funds for this aſtoniſhing annual addition to all her vaſt preceding taxes, an addition equal to the whole exciſe, cuſtoms, land and malt taxes of England taken together.

But what muſt be the reader's aſtoniſhment, perhaps his indignation, if he ſhould find that this great financier has fallen into the moſt unaccountable of all errors, no leſs an error than that of miſtaking the *identical ſums borrowed by France upon intereſt, for ſupplies raiſed within the year.* Can it be conceived that any man only entered into the firſt rudiments of finance ſhould make ſo egregious a blunder; ſhould write it, ſhould print it; ſhould carry it to a ſecond edition; ſhould take it not collaterally and incidentally, but lay it down as the corner ſtone of his whole ſyſtem in ſuch an important point as the comparative ſtates of France and England? But it will be ſaid, that it was his misfortune to be ill informed. Not at all. A man of any looſe general knowledge, and of the moſt ordinary ſagacity, never could have been miſinformed in ſo groſs a manner; becauſe he would have immediately rejected ſo wild and extravagant an account.

The fact is this: the credit of France, bad as it might have been, did enable her (not to raiſe within the year) but to *borrow* the very ſums the author mentions; that is to ſay 1,106,916,261 livres, making in the author's computation £. 50,314,378. The credit of France was low; but it was not annihilated. She did not derive, as our author chooſes to aſſert, any advantages from the debility of her credit. Its conſequence was the natural one: ſhe borrowed; but ſhe borrowed upon bad terms, indeed on the moſt exorbitant uſury.

In ſpeaking of a foreign revenue, the very pretence to accuracy would be the moſt inaccurate thing in the world. Neither the author nor I can with certainty authenticate the information we communicate to the public, nor in an affair of eternal fluctuation arrive at perfect exactneſs All we can do, and this we may be expected to do, is to avoid groſs errors and blunders of a capital nature. We cannot order the proper officer to lay the accounts before the houſe. But the reader muſt judge on the probability of the accounts we lay before him. The author ſpeaks of France as raiſing her ſupplies for war by taxes within the year; and of her debt, as a thing ſcarcely worthy of notice. I affirm that ſhe borrowed large ſums in every year; and has thereby accumulat-

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ed an immenſe debt. This debt continued after the war infinitely to embarraſs her affairs; and to find ſome means for its reduction was then and has ever ſince been the firſt object of her policy. But ſhe has ſo little ſucceeded in all her efforts, that the *perpetual* debt of France is at this hour little ſhort of £. 100,000,000, ſterling; that ſhe ſtands charged with at leaſt 40,000,000 of Engliſh pounds on life-rents and tontines. The annuities paid at this day at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, which are by no means her ſole payments of that nature, amount to 139,000,000 of livres, that is, to 6,318,000 pounds; beſides *Billets au porteur*, and various detached and unfunded debts, to a great amount, and which bear an intereſt.

At the end of the war, the intereſt payable on her debt amounted to upwards of ſeven millions ſterling. M. De la Verdy, the laſt hope of the French finances, was called in, to aid in the reduction of an intereſt, ſo light to our author, ſo intolerably heavy upon thoſe who are to pay it. After many unſucceſsful efforts towards reconciling arbitrary reduction with public credit, he was obliged to go the plain high road of power, and to impoſe a of 10 *per cent.* upon a very great part of the capital deb. of that kingdom; and this meaſure of preſent eaſe, to the deſtruction of future credit, produced about £. 500,000 a year, which was carried to their *Caiſſe d'amortiſſement*, or ſinking fund. But ſo unfaithfully and unſteadily has this and all the other articles which compoſe that fund been applied to their purpoſes, that they have given the ſtate but very little even of preſent relief, ſince it is known to the whole world that ſhe is behind hand on every one of her eſtabliſhments. Since the year 1763, there has been no operation of any conſequence on the French finances: and in this enviable condition is France at preſent with regard to her debt.

Every body knows that the principle of the debt is but a name; the intereſt is the only thing which can diſtreſs a nation. Take this idea, which will not be diſputed, and compare the intereſt paid by England with that paid by France:

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Intereſt paid by France, funded and unfunded for perpetuity or on lives, after the tax of 10 *per cent.* | 6,500,000 |
| Intereſt paid by England, as ſtated by the author, p. 30, | 4,600,000 |
| Intereſt paid by France exceeds that paid by England, | 1,900,000 |

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The author cannot complain, that I ſtate the intereſt paid by England as too low. He takes it himſelf as the extremeſt term. Nobody who knows any thing of the French finances will affirm that I ſtate the intereſt paid by that kingdom too high. It might be eaſily proved to amount to a great deal more: even this is near two millions above what is paid by England.

There are three ſtandards to judge of the good condition of a nation with regard to its finances. 1ſt, The relief of the people. 2d, The equality of ſupplies to eſtabliſhments. 3d, The ſtate of public credit. Try France on all theſe ſtandards.

Although our author very liberally adminiſters relief to the people of France, its government has not been altogether ſo gracious. Since the peace, ſhe has taken off but a ſingle *Vingtieme*, or ſhilling in the pound, and ſome ſmall matter in the capitation. But if the government has relieved them in one point, it has only burthened them the more heavily in another. The *Taille* [o], that grievous and deſtructive impoſition, which all their financiers lament, without being able to remove or to replace, has been augmented no leſs than 6 millions of livres, or 270,000 pounds Engliſh. A further augmentation of this or other duties is now talked of; and it is certainly neceſſary to their affairs; ſo exceedingly remote from either truth or veriſimilitude is the author's amazing aſſertion, *that the burthens of France in the war were in a great meaſure temporary, and muſt be greatly diminiſhed by a few years of peace.*

In the next place, if the people of France are not lightened of taxes, ſo neither is the ſtate diſburthened of charges. I ſpeak from very good information, that the annual income of that ſtate is at this day 30 millions of livres, or £.1,350,000 ſterling, ſhort of a proviſion for their ordinary peace eſtabliſhment, ſo far are they from the attempt or even hope to diſcharge any part of the capital of their enormous debt. Indeed under ſuch extreme ſtraitneſs and diſtraction labours the whole body of their finances, ſo far does their charge outrun their ſupply in every particular, that no man, I believe, who has conſidered their affairs with any degree of attention or information, but muſt hourly look for ſome extraordinary convulſion in that whole ſyſtem; the effect of which on France and even on all Europe it is difficult to conjecture.

In the third point of view, their credit. Let the reader caſt his eye on a table of the price of French funds, as they

[o] A tax rated by the intendant in each generality on the preſumed fortune of every perſon below the degree of a gentleman.

ſtood

ſtood a few weeks ago, compared with the ſtate of ſome of our Engliſh ſtocks, even in their preſent low condition:

| French. | | British. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 *per cents.* | 63. | *Bank ſtock*, 5½, | 159. |
| 4 *per cent.* (not taxed) | 57. | 4 *per cent.* conſ. | 100. |
| 3 *per cent.* ditto, | 49. | 3 *per cent.* conſ. | 88. |

This ſtate of the funds of France and England is ſufficient to convince even prejudice and obſtinacy, that if France and England are not in the ſame condition (as the author affirms they are not) the difference is infinitely to the diſadvantage of France. This depreciation of their funds has not much the air of a nation lightening burthens and diſcharging debts.

Such is the true comparative ſtate of the two kingdoms in thoſe capital points of view. Now as to the nature of the taxes which provide for this debt, as well as for their ordinary eſtabliſhments, the author has thought proper to affirm that "they are comparatively light;" "that ſhe has mort-"gaged no ſuch oppreſſive taxes as ours:" his effrontery on this head is intolerable. Does the author recollect a ſingle tax in England to which ſomething parallel in nature, and as heavy in burthen, does not exiſt in France? does he not know that the lands of the nobleſſe are ſtill under the load of the greater part of the old feudal charges, from which the gentry of England have been relieved for upwards of 100 years, and which were in kind, as well as burthen, much worſe than our modern land tax? Beſides that all the gentry of France ſerve in the army on very ſlender pay, and to the utter ruin of their fortunes: All thoſe who are not noble have their lands heavily taxed. Does he not know that wine, brandy, ſoap, candles, leather, ſalt-petre, gunpowder, are taxed in France? has he not heard that government in France has made a monopoly of that great article of *ſalt?* that they compel the people to take a certain quantity of it, and at a certain rate, both rate and quantity fixed at the arbitrary pleaſure of the impoſer [P]? That they pay in France the *Taille*, an arbitrary impoſition on preſumed property? That a tax is laid in fact and name, on the ſame arbitrary ſtandard, upon the acquiſitions of their *induſtry?* and that in France a heavy *capitation tax* is alſo paid, from the higheſt to the very pooreſt ſort of people? have we taxes of ſuch weight, or

[P] Before the war it was ſold to, or rather forced on, the conſumer at 11 ſous, or about 5*d*. the pound. What it is at preſent, I am not informed. Even this will appear no trivial impoſition. In London, ſalt may be had at a penny farthing per pound from the laſt retailer.

any

any thing at all of the compulſion, in the article of *ſalt?* do we pay any *taillage*, any *faculty-tax*, any *induſtry-tax?* do we pay any *capitation* tax whatſoever? I believe the people of London would fall into an agony to hear of ſuch taxes propoſed upon them as are paid in Paris. There is not a ſingle article of proviſion for man or beaſt, which enters that great city, and is not exciſed: corn, hay, meal, butchers meat, fiſh, fowls, every thing. I do not here mean to cenſure the policy of taxes laid on the conſumption of great luxurious cities. I only ſtate the fact. We ſhould be with difficulty brought to hear of a tax of 50*s.* upon every ox ſold in Smithfield. Yet this tax is paid in Paris. Wine, the loweſt ſort of wine, little better than Engliſh ſmall beer, pays 2*d.* a bottle. We indeed tax our beer: but the impoſition on ſmall beer is very far from heavy. In no part of England are eatables of any kind the object of taxation. In almoſt every other country in Europe they are exciſed; more or leſs, in one place or in another. I have by me the ſtate of the revenues of many of the principal nations on the continent; and on comparing them with ours, I think I am fairly warranted to aſſert, that England is the moſt lightly taxed of any of the great ſtates of Europe. They whoſe unnatural and ſullen joy ariſes from a contemplation of the diſtreſſes of their country will revolt at this poſition. But, if I am called upon, I will prove it beyond all poſſibility of diſpute; even though this proof ſhould deprive theſe gentlemen of the ſingular ſatisfaction of conſidering their country as undone; and though the beſt civil government, the beſt conſtituted, and the beſt managed revenue that ever the world beheld, ſhould be thoroughly vindicated from their perpetual clamours and complaints. As to our neighbour and rival France, in addition to what I have here ſuggeſted, I ſay, and when the author chooſes formally to deny, I ſhall formally prove it, that her ſubjects pay more than England, on a computation of the wealth of both countries; that her taxes are more injudiciouſly and more oppreſſively impoſed; more vexatiouſly collected; come in a ſmaller proportion to the royal coffers, and are leſs applied by far to the public ſervice. I am not one of thoſe who chooſe to take the author's word for this happy and flouriſhing condition of the French finances, rather than attend to the changes, the violent puſhes, and the deſpair of all her own financiers. Does he chooſe to be referred for the eaſy and happy condition of the ſubject in France to the remonſtrances of their own parliaments, written with ſuch an eloquence, feeling,

and

and energy, as I have not ſeen exceeded in any other writings? The author may ſay their complaints are exaggerated, and the effects of faction. I anſwer, that they are the repreſentations of numerous, grave, and moſt reſpectable bodies of men, upon the affairs of their own country. But, allowing that diſcontent and faction may pervert the judgment of ſuch venerable bodies in France, we have as good a right to ſuppoſe that the ſame cauſes may full as probably have produced from a private, however reſpectable perſon, that frightful, and, I truſt I have ſhewn, groundleſs repreſentation of our own affairs in England.

The author is ſo conſcious of the dangerous effects of that repreſentation, that he thinks it neceſſary, and very neceſſary it is, to guard againſt them. He aſſures us "that he has "not made that diſplay of the difficulties of his country, to "expoſe her counſels to the ridicule of other ſtates, or to "provoke a vanquiſhed enemy to inſult her: nor to excite "the peoples rage againſt their governors, or ſink them into "a deſpondency of the public welfare." I readily admit this apology for his intentions. God forbid I ſhould think any man capable of entertaining ſo execrable and ſenſeleſs a deſign. The true cauſe of his drawing ſo ſhocking a picture is no more than this; and it ought rather to claim our pity than excite our indignation. He finds himſelf out of power; and this condition is intolerable to him. The ſame ſun which gilds all nature, and exhilarates the whole creation, does not ſhine upon diſappointed ambition. It is ſomething that rays out of darkneſs, and inſpires nothing but gloom and melancholy. Men in this deplorable ſtate of mind find a comfort in ſpreading the contagion of their ſpleen. They find an advantage too; for it is a general popular error to imagine the loudeſt complainers for the public, to be the moſt anxious for its welfare. If ſuch perſons can anſwer the ends of relief and profit to themſelves, they are apt to be careleſs enough about either the means or the conſequences.

Whatever this complainant's motives may be, the effects can by no poſſibility be other than thoſe which he ſo ſtrongly, and, I hope truly, diſclaims all intention of producing. To verify this, the reader has only to conſider how dreadful a picture he has drawn in his 5th page of the ſtate of this kingdom; ſuch a picture as, I believe, has hardly been applicable without ſome exaggeration to the moſt degenerate and undone commonwealth that ever exiſted. Let this view of things be compared with the proſpect of a remedy which he

propoſes

propoſes in the page directly oppoſite and the ſubſequent. I believe no man living could have imagined it poſſible, except for the ſake of burleſquing a ſubject, to propoſe remedies ſo ridiculouſly diſproportionate to the evil, ſo full of uncertainty in their operation, and depending for their ſucceſs in every ſtep upon the happy event of ſo many new, dangerous, and viſionary projects. It is not amiſs, that he has thought proper to give the publick ſome little notice of what they may expect from his friends when our affairs ſhall be committed to their management. Let us ſee how the accounts of diſeaſe and remedy are balanced in his State of the Nation. In the firſt place, on the ſide of evils, he ſtates, "An empo- "veriſhed and heavily-burthened public. A declining trade "and decreaſing ſpecie. The power of the crown never ſo "much extended over the great; but the great without in- "fluence over the lower ſort. Parliament loſing its reve- "rence with the people. The voice of the multitude ſet up "againſt the ſenſe of the legiſlature; a people luxurious and "licentious, impatient of rule, and deſpiſing all authority. "Government relaxed in every ſinew, and a corrupt ſelfiſh "ſpirit pervading the whole. An opinion of many, that the "form of government is not worth contending for. No at- "tachment in the bulk of the people towards the conſtitu- "tion. No reverence for the cuſtoms of our anceſtors. "No attachment but to private intereſt, nor any zeal but "for ſelfiſh gratifications. Trade and manufactures going "to ruin. Great Britain in danger of becoming tributary "to France, and the deſcent of the crown dependent on "her pleaſure. Ireland in caſe of war to become a prey to "France; and Great Britain, unable to recover Ireland, "cede it by treaty (the author never can think of a treaty "without making ceſſions) in order to purchaſe peace for "herſelf. The colonies left expoſed to the ravages of a do- "meſtic, or the conqueſt of a foreign enemy."——Gloomy enough, God knows. The author well obſerves, *that a mind not totally devoid of feeling cannot look upon ſuch a proſpect without horror; and an heart capable of humanity muſt be unable to bear its deſcription.* He ought to have added, that no man of common diſcretion ought to have exhibited it to the public, if it were true; or of common honeſty, if it were falſe.

But now for the comfort; the day-ſtar which is to ariſe in our hearts; the author's grand ſcheme for totally reverſing this diſmal ſtate of things, and making us "happy at home "and reſpected abroad, formidable in war and flouriſhing in "peace."

In

In this great work he proceeds with a facility equally aſtoniſhing and pleaſing. Never was financier leſs embaraſſed by the burthen of eſtabliſhments, or with the difficulty of finding ways and means. If an eſtabliſhment is troubleſome to him, he lops off at a ſtroke juſt as much of it as he chooſes. He mows down, without giving quarter, or aſſigning reaſon, army, navy, ordnance, ordinary, extraordinaries; nothing can ſtand before him. Then, when he comes to provide, *Amaltbea*'s horn is in his hands; and he pours out with an inexhauſtible bounty, taxes, duties, loans, and revenues, without uneaſineſs to himſelf, or burthen to the public. Inſomuch, that when we conſider the abundance of his reſources, we cannot avoid being ſurprized at his extraordinary attention to ſavings. But it is all the exuberance of his goodneſs.

This book has ſo much of a certain tone of power, that one would be almoſt tempted to think it written by ſome perſon who had been in high office. A man is generally rendered ſomewhat a worſe reaſoner for having been a miniſter. In private, the aſſent of liſtening and obſequious friends; in publick, the venal cry and prepared vote of a paſſive ſenate, confirm him in habits of begging the queſtion with impunity, and aſſerting without thinking himſelf obliged to prove. Had it not been for ſome ſuch habits, the author could never have expected that we ſhould take his eſtimate for a peace eſtabliſhment ſolely on his word

This eſtimate which he gives, is the great ground-work of his plan for the national redemption; and it ought to be well and firmly laid, or what muſt become of the ſuperſtructure? One would have thought the natural method in a plan of reformation would be, to take the preſent exiſting eſtimates as they ſtand; and then to ſhew what may be practicably and ſafely defalcated from them. This would, I ſay, be the natural courſe; and what would be expected from a man of buſineſs. But this author takes a very different method. For the ground of his ſpeculation of a preſent peace eſtabliſhment, he reſorts to a former ſpeculation of the ſame kind, which was in the mind of the miniſter of the year 1764. Indeed it never exiſted any where elſe. "The plan," ſays he, with his uſual eaſe, "has been already formed, and the out-"line drawn by the adminiſtration of 1764. I ſhall attempt "to fill up the void and obliterated parts and trace its opera-"tion. The ſtanding expence of the preſent (his projected) "peace eſtabliſhment *improved by the experience of the two* "*laſt years may be thus eſtimated*;" and he eſtimates it at £. 3,468,161.

Here

Her too it would be natural to expect ſome reaſons for condemning the ſubſequent actual eſtabliſhments which have ſo much tranſgreſſed the limits of his plan of 1764, as well as ſome arguments in favour of his new project; which has in ſome articles exceeded, in others fallen ſhort, but on the whole is much below his old one. Hardly a word on any of theſe points, the only points however that are in the leaſt eſſential; for unleſs you aſſign reaſons for the encreaſe or diminution of the ſeveral articles of public charge, the playing at eſtabliſhments and eſtimates is an amuſement of no higher order, and of much leſs ingenuity, than *Queſtions and commands*, or *What is my thought like?* To bring more diſtinctly under the reader's view this author's ſtrange method of proceeding, I will lay before him the three ſchemes; *viz.* the idea of the miniſters in 1764, the actual eſtimates of the two laſt years as given by the author himſelf, and laſtly the new project of his political millennium:

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Plan of eſtabliſhment for 1764, as by Conſiderations, p. 39, | [q] 3,609,700 |
| Medium of 1767 and 1768, as by State of the Nation, p. 33, | 3,919,375 |
| Preſent peace eſtabliſhment, as by the project in State of the Nation, p. 37, | 3,468,161 |

It is not from any thing our author has any where ſaid, that you are enabled to find the ground, much leſs the juſtification, of the immenſe difference between theſe ſeveral ſyſtems; you muſt compare them yourſelf, article by article; no very pleaſing employment, by the way, to compare the agreement or diſagreement of two chimeras. I now only ſpeak of the compariſon of his own two projects. As to the latter of them, it differs from the former, by having ſome of the articles diminiſhed, and others encreaſed. I find the chief article of *reduction* ariſes from the ſmaller *deficiency* of *land and malt*, and of the *annuity funds*, which he brings down to £. 295,561 in his new eſtimate, from £. 502,400, which he had allowed for thoſe articles in the Conſiderations. With this *reduction*, owing, as it muſt be, merely to a ſmaller deficiency of funds, he has nothing at all to do. It can be no work and no merit of his. But with regard to the *encreaſe*, the matter is very different. It is all his own; the publick is loaded (for any thing we can ſee to the contrary) entirely *gratis*. The chief articles of the *encreaſe* are on the *navy*, and on the *army* and *ordnance extraordinaries*; the *na-*

[q] The figures in the Conſiderations are wrong caſt up; it ſhould be £. 3,608,700.

vy being eſtimated in his *State of the Nation* £. 50,000 a year more, and the *army* and *ordnance extraordinaries* £. 40,000 more than he had thought proper to allow for them in that eſtimate in his *Conſiderations*, which he makes the foundation of his preſent project. He has given no ſort of reaſon, ſtated no ſort of neceſſity for this additional allowance either in the one article or the other. What is ſtill ſtronger, he admits that his allowance for the army and ordnance extras is too great, and expreſly refers you to the *Conſiderations*; where, far from giving £. 75,000 a year to that ſervice, as the *State of the Nation* has done, the author apprehends his own ſcanty proviſion of £. 35,000 to be by far too conſiderable, and thinks it may well admit of further reductions[r]. Thus, according to his own principles, this great oeconomiſt falls into a vicious prodigality; and is as far in his eſtimates from a conſiſtency with his own principles as with the real nature of the ſervices.

Still, however, his preſent eſtabliſhment differs from its archetype of 1764, by being, though raiſed in particular parts, upon the whole about £. 141,000 ſmaller. It is improved, he tells us, by the experience of the two laſt years. One

[r] The author of the State of the Nation, p. 38, informs us, that the ſum of £. 75,000, allowed by him for the extras of the army and ordnance, is far leſs than was allowed for the ſame ſervice in the years 1767 and 1768. It is ſo undoubtedly, and by at leaſt £. 200,000. He ſees that he cannot abide by the plan of the Conſiderations in this point, nor is he willing wholly to give it up. Such an enormous difference as that between £. 35,000 and £. 300,000 puts him to a ſtand. Should he adopt the latter plan of encreaſed expence, he muſt then confeſs, that he had, on a former occaſion, egregiouſly trifled with the publick; at the ſame time all his future promiſes of reduction muſt fall to the ground. If he ſtuck to the £. 35,000, he was ſure that every one muſt expect from him ſome account how this monſtrous charge came to continue ever ſince the war, when it was clearly unneceſſary; how all thoſe ſucceſſions of miniſters (his own included) came to pay it; and why his great friend in parliament, and his partizans without doors, came not to purſue to ruin, at leaſt to utter ſhame, the authors of ſo groundleſs and ſcandalous a profuſion. In this ſtrait he took a middle way; and to come nearer the real ſtate of the ſervice, he outbid the Conſiderations, at one ſtroke, £. 40,000; at the ſame time he hints to you, that you may *expect* ſome benefit alſo from the original plan. But the author of the Conſiderations will not ſuffer him to eſcape ſo. He has pinned him down to his £. 35,000; for that is the ſum he has choſen, not as what he thinks will probably be required, but as making the moſt ample allowance for every poſſible contingency. See that author, p. 49 and 51.

One would have concluded that the peace eſtabliſhment of theſe two years had been leſs than that of 1764, in order to ſuggeſt to the author his improvements, which enabled him to reduce it. But how does that turn out?

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Peace eſtabliſhment[s] 1767 and 1768, medium, | 3,919,375 |
| Ditto, eſtimate in the conſiderations, for 1764, | 3,609,700 |
| Difference, | £. 309,675 |

A vaſt encreaſe inſtead of diminution. The experience then of the two laſt years ought naturally to have given the idea of an heavier eſtabliſhment; but this writer is able to diminiſh by encreaſing, and to draw the effects of ſubtraction from the operations of addition. By means of theſe new powers he may certainly do whatever he pleaſes. He is indeed moderate enough in the uſe of them, and condeſcends to ſettle his eſtabliſhment at £.3,468,161 a year.

However, he has not yet done with it; he has further ideas of ſaving, and new reſources of revenue. Theſe additional ſavings are principally two: 1ſt, *It is to be hoped*, ſays he, that the ſum of £. 250,000 (which in the eſtimate he allows for the deficiency of land and malt) will be leſs by £. 37,924[t].

2d, That the ſum of £. 20,000 allowed for the Foundling Hoſpital, and £. 1,800 for American Surveys, will ſoon ceaſe to be neceſſary, as the ſervices will be compleated.

What follows with regard to the reſources is very well worthy of the reader's attention. "Of this eſtimate, ſays "he, upwards of £. 300,000 will be for the plantation ſer- "vice; and that Sum, *I hope*, the people of Ireland and

 "the

[s] He has done great injuſtice to the eſtabliſhment of 1768; but I have not here time for this diſcuſſion, nor is it neceſſary to this argument.

[t] In making up this account he falls into a ſurpriſing error of arithmetic. "The deficiency of the land-tax in the year 1754 "and 1755, when it was at 2 *s.* amounted to no more, on a me- "dium, than £. 49,372; to which, if we add *half the ſum*, it "will give us £. 79,058 as the peace deficiency at 3 *s.*"

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Total, | 49,372 |
| Add the half, | 24,686 |
| Reſult, | £. 74,058 |

Which he makes £. 79,058. This is indeed in diſfavour of his argument; but we ſhall ſee that he has ways, by other errors, of reimburſing himſelf.

" the colonies *might be induced* to take off Great Britain, " and defray between them in the proportion of £. 200,000 " by the colonies. and £. 100,000 by Ireland."

Such is the whole of this mighty ſcheme. Take his reduced eſtimate, and his further reductions, and his reſources all together, and the reſult will be; He will *certainly* lower the proviſion made for the navy. He will cut off largely (God knows what or how) from the army and ordnance extraordinaries. He may be *expected* to cut off more. He *hopes* that the deficiencies on land and malt will be leſs than uſual, and he *hopes* that America and Ireland might be *induced* to take off £. 300,000 of our annual charges.

If any one of theſe Hopes, Mights, Inſinuations, Expectations, and Inducements ſhould fail him, there will be a formidable gaping breach in his whole project. If all of them ſhould fail, he has left the nation without a glimmering of hope in this thick night of terrors which he has thought fit to ſpread about us. If every one of them, which attended with ſucceſs, would ſignify any thing to our revenue, can have no effect but to add to our diſtractions and dangers, we ſhall be if poſſible in a ſtill worſe condition from his projects of cure than he repreſents us from our original diſorders.

Before we examine into the conſequence of theſe ſchemes, and the probability of theſe ſavings, let us ſuppoſe them all real and all ſafe, and then ſee what it is they amount to, and how he reaſons on them:

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Deficiency on land and malt, leſs by | 37,000 |
| Foundling Hoſpital, | 20,000 |
| American Surveys, | 1,800 |
| | £. 58,800 |

This is the amount of the only articles of ſaving he ſpecifies; and yet he chooſes to aſſert " that we may venture on the " credit of them to reduce the ſtanding expences of the eſti- " mate (from £. 3,468,161) to £. 3,300,000;" that is, for a ſaving of £. 58,000, he is not aſhamed to take credit for a defalcation from his own ideal eſtabliſhment in a ſum of no leſs than £. 168,161! Suppoſe even that we were to take up the eſtimate of the Conſiderations (which is however abandoned in the State of the Nation), and reduce his £. 75,000 extraordinaries to the original £. 35,000. Still all theſe ſavings joined together give us but £. 98,000; that is, near £. 70,000 ſhort of the credit he calls for, and for which he has neither given any reaſon, or furniſhed any data whatſoever for others to reaſon upon.

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Such are his ſavings, as operating on his own project of a peace eſtabliſhment. Let us now conſider them as they affect the exiſting eſtabliſhment and our actual ſervices. He tells us, the ſum allowed in his eſtimate for the navy is "£. 69,321 leſs than the grant for that ſervice in 1767; but "in that grant £. 30,000 was included for the purchaſe of "hemp, and a ſaving of about £. 25,000 was made in that "year." The author has got ſome ſecret in arithmetick. Theſe two ſums put together amount, in the ordinary way of computing, to £. 55,000, and not to £. 69,321. On what principle has he choſen to take credit for £. 14,321 more? To what this ſtrange inaccuracy is owing, I cannot poſſibly comprehend; nor is it very material, where the logic is ſo bad, and the policy ſo erroneous, whether the arithmetic be juſt or otherwiſe. But in a ſcheme for making this nation "happy at home and reſpected abroad, formidable in war "and flouriſhing in peace," it is ſurely a little unfortunate for us, that he has picked out the *Navy*, as the very firſt object of his oeconomical experiments. Of all the public ſervices, that of the navy is the one in which tampering may be of the greateſt danger, which can worſt be ſupplied upon an emergency, and of which any failure draws after it the longeſt and heavieſt train of conſequences. I am far from ſaying, that this or any ſervice ought not to be conducted with oeconomy. But I will never ſuffer the ſacred name of oeconomy to be beſtowed upon arbitrary defalcation of charge. The author tells us himſelf, "that to ſuffer the navy to rot in har-"bour for want of repairs and marines, would be to invite "deſtruction." It would ſo. When the author talks therefore of ſavings on the navy eſtimate, it is incumbent on him to let us know, not what ſums he will cut off, but what branch of that ſervice he deems ſuperfluous. Inſtead of putting us off with unmeaning generalities, he ought to have ſtated what naval force, what naval works, and what naval ſtores, with the loweſt eſtimated expence, are neceſſary to keep our marine in a condition commenſurate to its great ends. And this too not for the contracted and deceitful ſpace of a ſingle year, but for ſome reaſonable term. Every body knows that many charges cannot be in their nature regular or annual. In the year 1767 a ſtock of hemp, &c. was to be laid in; that charge intermits, but it does not end. Other charges of other kinds take their place. Great works are now carrying on at Portſmouth, but not of greater magnitude than utility; and they muſt be provided for. A year's eſtimate is therefore no juſt idea at all of a permanent peace eſtabliſhment. Had the author opened this matter upon

theſe plain principles, a judgment might have been formed, how far he had contrived to reconcile national defence with public oeconomy. Till he has done it, thoſe who had rather depend on any man's reaſon than the greateſt man's authority, will not give him credit on this head for the ſaving of a ſingle ſhilling. As to thoſe ſavings which are already made, or in courſe of being made, whether right or wrong, he has nothing at all to do with them; they can be no part of his project, conſidered as a plan of reformation. I greatly fear that the error has not lately been on the ſide of profuſion.

Another head is the ſaving on the Army and Ordnance extraordinaries, particularly in the American branch. What or how much reduction may be made, none of us, I believe, can with any fairneſs pretend to ſay; very little, I am convinced. The ſtate of America is extremely unſettled; more troops have been ſent thither; new diſpoſitions have been made; and this augmentation of number, and change of diſpoſition, has rarely, I believe, the effect of leſſening the bill for extraordinaries, which, if not this year, yet in the next, we muſt certainly feel. Care has not been wanting to introduce oeconomy into that part of the ſervice. The author's great friend has made, I admit, ſome regulations; his immediate ſucceſſors have made more, and better. This part will be handled more ably and more minutely at another time; but none can cut down this bill of extraordinaries at his pleaſure. The author has given us nothing, but his word, for any certain or conſiderable reduction; and this we ought to be the more cautious in taking, as he has promiſed great ſavings in his *Conſiderations*, which he has not choſen to abide by in his *State of the Nation*.

On this head of the American extraordinaries, he can take credit for nothing. As to his next, the leſſening of the deficiency of the land and malt-tax, particularly of the malt-tax; any perſon the leaſt converſant in that ſubject cannot avoid a ſmile. This deficiency ariſes from charge of collection, from anticipation, and from defective produce. What has the author ſaid on the reduction of any head of this deficiency upon the land-tax? On theſe points he is abſolutely ſilent. As to the deficiency on the malt tax, which is chiefly owing to a defective produce, he has, and can have, nothing to propoſe. If this deficiency ſhould be leſſened by the encreaſe of malting in any years more than others (as it is a greatly fluctuating object) how much of this obligation ſhall we owe to this author's miniſtry? will it not be the caſe under any adminiſtration? muſt it not go to the general ſervice of the year, in ſome way or other, let the finances be in whoſe hands

hands they will? But why take credit for ſo extremely reduced a deficiency at all? I can tell him he has no rational ground for it in the produce of the year 1767, and I ſuſpect will have full as little reaſon from the produce of the year 1768. That produce may indeed become greater, and the deficiency of courſe will be leſs. It may too be far otherwiſe. A fair and judicious financier will not, as this writer has done, for the ſake of making out a ſpecious account, ſelect a favourable year or two, at remote periods, and ground his calculations on thoſe. In 1768 he will not take the deficiencies of 1753 and 1754 for his ſtandard. Sober men have hitherto (and muſt continue this courſe to preſerve this character) taken indifferently the mediums of the years immediately preceding. But a perſon who has a ſcheme from which he promiſes much to the public ought to be ſtill more cautious; he would chooſe to ground his ſpeculation rather on the loweſt mediums; becauſe all new ſchemes are known to be ſubject to ſome defect or failure not foreſeen; and which therefore every prudent propoſer will be ready to allow for, in order to lay his foundation as low and as ſolid as poſſible. Quite contrary is the practice of ſome politicians. They firſt propoſe ſavings, which they well know cannot be made, in order to get a reputation for oeconomy. In due time they aſſume another, but a different merit, by providing for the ſervice they had before cut off or ſtraitened, and which they can then very eaſily prove to be neceſſary. In the ſame ſpirit, they raiſe magnificent ideas of revenue on funds which they know to be inſufficient. Afterwards, who can blame them, if they do not ſatisfy the public deſires? They are great artificers; but they cannot work without materials.

Theſe are ſome of the little arts of great ſtateſmen. To ſuch we leave them, and follow where the author leads us, to his next reſource the Foundling-hoſpital. Whatever particular virtue there is in the mode of this ſaving, there ſeems to be nothing at all new, and indeed nothing wonderfully important in it. The ſum annually voted for the ſupport of the Foundling-hoſpital has been in a former parliament limited to the eſtabliſhment of the children then in the hoſpital. When they are apprenticed, this proviſion will ceaſe. It will therefore fall in more or leſs at different times; and will at length ceaſe entirely. But, until it does, we cannot reckon upon it as the ſaving on the eſtabliſhment of any given year: nor can one conceive how the author comes to mention this, any more than ſome other articles, as a part of a *new* plan of œconomy which is to retrieve our affairs.

This charge will indeed ceaſe in its own time. But will no other ſucceed to it? Has he ever known the public free from ſome contingent charge, either for the juſt ſupport of royal dignity, or for national magnificence, or for public charity, or for public ſervice? does he chooſe to flatter his readers that no ſuch will ever return? or does he in good earneſt declare, that let the reaſon, or neceſſity, be what they will, he is reſolved not to provide for ſuch ſervices?

Another reſource of œconomy yet remains, for he gleans the field very cloſely, £. 1,800 for the American ſurveys. Why what ſignifies a diſpute about trifles? he ſhall have it. But while he is carrying it off, I ſhall juſt whiſper in his ear, that neither the ſaving that is allowed, or that which is doubted of, can at all belong to that future propoſed adminiſtration, whoſe touch is to cure all our evils. Both the one and the other belong equally (as indeed all the reſt do) to the preſent adminiſtration, to any adminiſtration; becauſe they are the gift of time, and not the bounty of the Exchequer.

I have now done with all the minor preparatory parts of the author's ſcheme, the ſeveral articles of ſaving which he propoſes. At length comes the capital operation, his new reſources. Three hundred thouſand pounds a year from America and Ireland. —— Alas! alas! if that too ſhould fail us, what will become of this poor undone nation? The author, in a tone of great humility, *hopes* they may be *induced* to pay it. Well, if that be all, we may hope ſo too: and for any light he is pleaſed to give us into the ground of this hope, and the ways and means of this inducement, here is a ſpeedy end both of the queſtion and the revenue.

It is the conſtant cuſtom of this author, in all his writings, to take it for granted, that he has given you a revenue, whenever he can point out to you where you may have money, if you can contrive how to get at it; and this ſeems to be the maſter-piece of his financial ability. I think however, in his way of proceeding, he has behaved rather like an harſh ſtep-dame, than a kind nurſing mother to his country. Why ſtop at £. 300,000? If his ſtate of things be at all founded, America and Ireland are much better able to pay £. 600,000, than we are to ſatisfy ourſelves with half that ſum. However, let us forgive him this one inſtance of tenderneſs towards Ireland and the Colonies.

He ſpends a vaſt deal of time, in an endeavour to prove, that Ireland is able to bear greater impoſitions. He is of opinion, that the poverty of the lower claſs of people there is, in a great meaſure, owing to a *want* of judicious taxes; that a land tax will enrich her tenants; that taxes are paid

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in England which are not paid there; that the colony trade is encreaſed above £. 100,000 ſince the peace; that ſhe *ought* to have further indulgences in that trade; and *ought* to have further privileges in the woollen manufacture. From theſe premiſes of what ſhe has, what ſhe has not, and what ſhe ought to have, he infers that Ireland will contribute £. 100,000, towards the extraordinaries of the American eſtabliſhment.

I ſhall make no objections whatſoever, logical or financial, to this reaſoning: many occur; but they would lead me from my purpoſe, from which I do not intend to be diverted, becauſe it ſeems to me of no ſmall importance. It will be juſt enough to hint, what I dare ſay many readers have before obſerved, that when any man propoſes new taxes in a country with which he is not perſonally converſant by reſidence or office, he ought to lay open its ſituation much more minutely and critically than this author has done, or than perhaps he is able to do. He ought not to content himſelf with ſaying that a ſingle article of her trade is encreaſed £. 100,000 a year; he ought, if he argues from the encreaſe of trade to an encreaſe of taxes, to ſtate the whole trade, and not one branch of trade only, he ought to enter fully into the ſtate of its remittances, and the courſe of its exchange; he ought likewiſe to examine whether all its eſtabliſhments are encreaſed or diminiſhed; and whether it incurs or diſcharges debt annually. But I paſs over all this; and am content to aſk a few plain queſtions.

Does the author then ſeriouſly mean to propoſe in parliament a land tax, or any tax for £. 100,000 a year upon Ireland? If he does, and that fatally, by his temerity and our weakneſs, he ſhould ſucceed, then I ſay he will throw the whole empire from one end of it to the other into mortal convulſions. What is it that can ſatisfy the furious and perturbed mind of this man? is it not enough for him that ſuch projects have alienated our colonies from the mother country, and not to propoſe violently to tear our ſiſter kingdom alſo from our ſide, and to convince every dependent part of the empire, that, when a little money is to be raiſed, we have no ſort of regard to their antient cuſtoms, their opinions, their circumſtances, or their affections? He has however a *douceur* for Ireland in his pocket; benefits in trade, by opening the woollen manufacture to that nation. A very right idea in my opinion; but not more ſtrong in reaſon, than likely to be oppoſed by the moſt powerful and moſt violent of all local prejudices and popular paſſions. Firſt, a fire is already kindled by his ſchemes of taxation in America;

America; he then propoſes one which will ſet all Ireland in a blaze; and his way of quenching both is by a plan which may kindle perhaps ten times a greater flame in Britain.

Will the author pledge himſelf, previous to his propoſal of ſuch a tax, to carry this enlargement of the Iriſh trade? if he does not, then the tax will be certain; the benefit will be leſs than problematical. In this view, his compenſation to Ireland vaniſhes into ſmoke; the tax, to their prejudices, will appear ſtark naked in the light of an act of arbitrary power and oppreſſion. But, if he ſhould propoſe the benefit and tax together, then the people of Ireland, a very high and ſpirited people, would think it the worſt bargain in the world. They would look upon the one as wholly vitiated and poiſoned by the other; and, if they could not be ſeparated, would infallibly reſiſt them both together. Here would be taxes indeed, amounting to an handſome ſum; £. 100,000 very effectually voted, and paſſed through the beſt and moſt authentic forms; but how to be collected?—— This is his perpetual manner. One of his projects depends for ſucceſs upon another project, and this upon a third, all of them equally viſionary. His finance is like the Indian philoſophy; his Earth is poiſed on the horns of a Bull, his Bull ſtands on an Elephant, his Elephant is ſupported by a Tortoiſe; and ſo on for ever.

As to his American £.200,000 a year, he is ſatisfied to repeat gravely, as he has done an hundred times before, that the Americans are able to pay it. Well, and what then? does he lay open any part of his plan how they may be compelled to pay it, without plunging ourſelves into calamities that outweigh ten-fold the propoſed benefit? or does he ſhew how they may be induced to ſubmit to it quietly? or does he give any thing like ſatisfaction concerning the mode of levying it, in commercial colonies one of the moſt important and difficult of all conſiderations? Nothing like it. To the ſtamp act, whatever its excellencies may be, I think he will not in reality recur, or even chooſe to aſſert that he means to do ſo, in caſe his miniſter ſhould come again into power. If he does I will predict that ſome of the faſteſt friends of that miniſter will deſert him upon this point. As to port duties, he has damned them all in the lump, by declaring them "contrary to the firſt princi-"ples of colonization, and not leſs prejudicial to the inte-"reſts of Great-Britain than to thoſe of the colonies." Surely this ſingle obſervation of his, ought to have taught him a little caution; he ought to have begun to doubt, whether

ther there is not ſomething in the nature of commercial colonies, which renders them an unfit object of taxation; when port duties, ſo large a fund of revenue in almoſt all countries, are by himſelf found, in this caſe, not only improper, but deſtructive. However, he has here pretty well narrowed the field of taxation. Stamp act, hardly to be reſumed. Port duties, miſchievous. Exciſes, I believe he will ſcarcely think worth the collection (if any revenue ſhould be ſo) in America. Land tax (notwithſtanding his opinion of its immenſe uſe to Agriculture), he will not directly propoſe, before he has thought again and again on the ſubject. Indeed he very readily recommends it for Ireland, and ſeems to think it not improper for America; becauſe, he obſerves, they already raiſe moſt of their taxes internally, including this tax. A moſt curious reaſon truly! becauſe their lands are already heavily burthened, he thinks it right to burthen them ſtill further. But he will recollect, for ſurely he cannot be ignorant of it, that the lands of America are not, as in England, let at a rent certain in money, and therefore cannot, as here, be taxed at a certai pound rate. They value them in groſs among themſelves; and none but themſelves in their ſeveral diſtricts can value them. Without their hearty concurrence and co-operation, it is evident we cannot advance a ſtep in the aſſeſſing or collecting any land tax. As to the taxes which in ſome places the Americans pay by the acre, they are merely duties of regulation; they are ſmall; and to encreaſe them, notwithſtanding the ſecret virtues of a land tax, would be the moſt effectual means of preventing that cultivation they are intended to promote. Beſides, the whole country is heavily in arrear already for land taxes and quit rents. They have different methods of taxation in the different provinces, agreeable to their ſeveral local circumſtances. In New England by far the greateſt part of their revenue is raiſed by *faculty taxes* and *capitations*. Such is the method in many others. It is obvious that parliament, unaſſiſted by the colonies themſelves, cannot take ſo much as a ſingle ſtep in this mode of taxation. Then what tax is it he will impoſe? Why, after all the boaſting ſpeeches and writings of his faction for theſe four years, after all the vain expectations which they have held out to a deluded public, this their great advocate, after twiſting the ſubject every way, after writhing himſelf into every poſture, after knocking at every door, is obliged fairly to abandon every mode of taxation whatſoever in America. He thinks it the beſt method for parliament to impoſe the ſum, and reſerve the account to itſelf, leaving

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the mode of taxation to the colonies. But how and in what proportions? what does the author ſay? O, not a ſingle ſyllable on this the moſt material part of the whole queſtion. Will he, in parliament, undertake to ſettle the proportions of ſuch payments from Nova Scotia to Nevis, in no fewer than ſix and twenty different countries, varying in almoſt every poſſible circumſtance one from another? if he does, I tell him, he adjourns his revenue to a very long day. If he leaves it to themſelves to ſettle theſe proportions, he adjourns it to dooms-day.

Then what does he get by this method on the ſide of acquieſcence? will the people of America reliſh this courſe, of giving and granting and applying their money, the better becauſe their aſſemblies are made commiſſioners of the taxes? This is far worſe than all his former projects; for here, if the aſſemblies ſhall refuſe, or delay, or be negligent, or fraudulent, in this new-impoſed duty, we are wholly without remedy; and neither our cuſtom-houſe officers, nor our troops, nor our armed ſhips, can be of the leaſt uſe in the collection. Nothing can be a more contemptible idea (I will not call it an oppreſſive one, the harſhneſs is loſt in the folly) than that of propoſing to get any revenne from the Americans but by their freeſt and moſt chearful conſent. Moſt monied men know their own intereſt right well; and are as able, as any financier, in the valuation of riſques. Yet I think this financier will ſcarcely find that adventurer hardy enough, at any premium, to advance a ſhilling upon a vote of ſuch taxes. Let him name the man, or ſet of men, that would do it. This is the only proof of the value of revenues; what would an intereſted man rate them at? His ſubſcription would be at ninety-nine *per cent.* diſcount the very firſt day of its opening. Here is our only national ſecurity from ruin; a ſecurity upon which no man in his ſenſes would venture a ſhilling of his fortune. Yet he puts down thoſe articles as gravely in his ſupply for his peace eſtabliſhment, as if the money had been all fairly lodged in the Exchequer.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| American revenue, | 200,000 |
| Ireland, | 100,000 |

Very handſome indeed! but if ſupply is to be got in ſuch a manner, farewel the lucrative myſtery of finance! If you are to be credited for ſavings, without ſhewing how, why, or with what ſafety, they are to be made; and for revenues, without ſpecifying on what articles, or by what means, or at what expence, they are to be collected; there is not a clerk in a public office who may not outbid this author, or his

his friend, for the department of chancellor of the Exchequer; not an apprentice in the city, that will not ſtrike out, with the ſame advantages, the ſame, or a much larger, plan of ſupply.

Here is the whole of what belongs to the author's ſcheme for ſaving us from impending deſtruction. Take it even in its moſt favourable point of view, as a thing within poſſibility; and imagine what muſt be the wiſdom of this gentleman, or his opinion of ours, who could firſt think of repreſenting this nation in ſuch a ſtate, as no friend can look upon but with horror, and ſcarce an enemy without compaſſion, and afterwards of diverting himſelf with ſuch inadequate, impracticable, puerile methods for our relief? If theſe had been the dreams of ſome unknown, unnamed, and nameleſs writer, they would excite no alarm; their weakneſs had been an antidote to their malignity. But as they are univerſally believed to be written by the hand, or, what amounts to the ſame thing, under the immediate direction, of a perſon who has been in the management of the higheſt affairs, and may ſoon be in the ſame ſituation, I think it is not to be reckoned amongſt our greateſt conſolations, that the yet remaining power of this kingdom is to be employed in an attempt to realize notions, that are at once ſo frivolous, and ſo full of danger. That conſideration will juſtify me in dwelling a little longer on the difficulties of the nation, and the ſolutions of our author.

I am then perſuaded that he cannot be in the leaſt alarmed about our ſituation, let his outcry be what he pleaſes. I will give him a reaſon for my opinion, which, I think, he cannot diſpute. All that he beſtows upon the nation, which it does not poſſeſs without him, and ſuppoſing it all ſure money, amounts to no more than a ſum of £. 300,000 a year. This, he thinks, will do the buſineſs compleatly, and render us flouriſhing at home, and reſpectable abroad. If the option between glory and ſhame, if our ſalvation or deſtruction, depended on this ſum, it is impoſſible that he ſhould have been active, and made a merit of that activity, in taking off a ſhilling in the pound of the land tax, which came up to his grand deſideratum, and upwards of £. 100,000 more. By this manœuvre he left our trade, navigation and manufactures on the verge of deſtruction, our finances in ruin, our credit expiring, Ireland on the point of being ceded to France, the colonies of being torn to pieces, the ſucceſſion of the crown at the mercy of our great rival, and the kingdom itſelf on the very point of becoming tributary to that haughty power. All this for want of £. 300,000;

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for I defy the reader to point out any other revenue, or any other precise and defined scheme of politics, which he assigns for our redemption.

I know that two things may be said in his defence, as bad reasons are always at hand in an indifferent cause, that he was not sure the money would be applied as he thinks it ought to be, by the present ministers. I think as ill of them, as he does to the full. They have done very near as much mischief as they can do, to a constitution so robust as this. Nothing can make them more dangerous, but that as they are already in general composed of his disciples and instruments, they may add to the public calamity of their own measures, the adoption of his projects. But be the ministers what they may, the author knows that they could not avoid applying this £. 450,000 to the service of the establishment, as faithfully as he, or any other minister, could do. I say they could not avoid it, and have no merit at all for the application. But supposing that they should greatly mismanage this revenue. Here is a good deal of room for mistake and prodigality before you come to the edge of ruin. The difference between the amount of that real, and his imaginary revenue is, £. 150,000 a year, at least; a tolerable sum for them to play with: and this, in one article, might compensate the difference between the author's œconomy, and their profusion; and still, notwithstanding their vices and ignorance, the nation might be saved. The author ought also to recollect, that a good man would hardly deny, even to the worst of ministers, the means of doing their duty; especially in a crisis when our being depended on supplying them with some means or other. In such a case their penury of mind, in discovering resources, would make it rather the more necessary, not to strip such poor providers of the little stock they had in hand.

Besides, here is another subject of distress, and a very serious one, which puts us again to a stand. The author may possibly not come into power (I only state the possibility); he may not always continue in it; and if the contrary to all this should fortunately for us happen, what insurance on his life can be made for a sum adequate to his loss? Then we are thus unluckily situated, that the *chance* of an American and Irish revenue of £. 300,000 to be managed by him, is to save us from ruin two or three years hence at best, to make us happy at home and glorious abroad; and the actual possession of £. 450,000 English taxes cannot so much as protract our ruin without him. *Propria hæc si dona fuissent!* So we are staked on four chances; his power, its permanence,

nence, the ſucceſs of his projects, and the duration of his life. Any one of theſe failing, we are gone. This is no unfair repreſentation; ultimately all hangs on his life, becauſe, in his account of every ſet of men that have held or ſupported adminiſtration, he finds neither virtue or ability in any but himſelf. Indeed he pays (through their meaſures) ſome compliments to Lord Bute and Lord Deſpenſer. But to the latter, this is, I ſuppoſe, but a civility to old acquaintance; to the former, a little ſtroke of politicks. We may therefore fairly ſay, that our only hope is his life; and he has, to make it the more ſo, taken care to cut off any reſource which we poſſeſſed independent of him.

In the next place it may be ſaid, to excuſe any appearance of inconſiſtency between the author's actions and his declarations, that he thought it right to relieve the landed intereſt, and lay the burthen, where it ought to lie on the colonies. What to take off a revenue ſo neceſſary to our being, before any thing whatſoever was acquired in the place of it? In prudence he ought to have waited at leaſt for the firſt quarter's receipt of the new anonymous American revenue, and Iriſh land tax. Is there ſomething ſo ſpecific for our diſorders in American, and ſomething ſo poiſonous in Engliſh money, that one is to heal, the other to deſtroy us? To ſay that the landed intereſt *could* not continue to pay it for a year or two longer, is more than the author will attempt to prove. To ſay that they *would* pay it no longer, is to treat the landed intereſt, in my opinion, very ſcurvily. To ſuppoſe that the gentry, clergy, and freeholders of England, do not rate the commerce, the credit, the religion, the liberty, the independency of their country, and the ſucceſſion of their crown, at a ſhilling in the pound land tax! They never gave him reaſon to think ſo meanly of them. And if I am rightly informed, when that meaſure was debated in parliament, a very different reaſon was aſſigned by the author's great friend, as well as by others, for that reduction: one very different from the critical and almoſt deſperate ſtate of our finances. Some people then endeavoured to prove, that the reduction might be made without detriment to the national credit, or the due ſupport of a proper peace eſtabliſhment; otherwiſe it is obvious that the reduction could not be defended in argument. So that this author cannot deſpair ſo much of the commonwealth without this American and Iriſh revenue, as he pretends to do. If he does, the reader ſees how handſomely he has provided for us, by voting away one revenue, and by giving us a pamphlet on the other.

I do

I do not mean to blame the relief which was then given by parliament to the land. It was grounded on very weighty reaſons. The adminiſtration contended only for its continuance for a year, in order to have the merit of taking off the ſhilling in the pound immediately before the elections; and thus to bribe the freeholders of England with their own money.

It is true the author, in his eſtimate of ways and means, takes credit for £. 400,000 a year, *Indian revenue.* But he will not very poſitively inſiſt, that we ſhould put this revenue to the account of his plans or his power; and for a pretty plain reaſon: we are already near two years in poſſeſſion of it. By what means we came to that poſſeſſion, is a pretty long ſtory; however, I ſhall give nothing more than a ſhort abſtract of the proceeding, in order to ſee whether the author will take to himſelf any part in that meaſure.

The fact is this; the Eaſt-India company had for a good while ſollicited the miniſtry for a negotiation, by which they propoſed to pay largely for ſome advantages in their trade, and for the renewal of their charter. This had been the former method of tranſacting with that body. Government having only leaſed the monopoly for ſhort terms, the company has been obliged to reſort to it frequently for renewals. Theſe two parties had always negotiated (on the true principle of credit) not as government and ſubject, but as equal dealers, on the footing of mutual advantage. The public had derived great benefit from ſuch dealing. But at that time new ideas prevailed. The miniſtry, inſtead of liſtening to the propoſals of that company, choſe to ſet up a claim of the crown to their poſſeſſions. The original plan ſeems to have been, to get the houſe of commons to compliment the crown with a ſort of juridical declaration of a title to the company's acquiſitions in India; which the crown, on its part, with the beſt air in the world, was to beſtow upon the public. Then it would come to the turn of the houſe of commons again to be liberal and grateful to the crown. The civil liſt debts were to be paid off; with perhaps a pretty augmentation of income. All this was to be done on the moſt public-ſpirited principles, and with a politeneſs and mutual interchange of good offices, that could not but have charmed. But, what was beſt of all, theſe civilities were to be without a farthing of charge to either of the kind and obliging parties.--The Eaſt-India company was to be covered with infamy and diſgrace, and at the ſame time was to pay the whole bill.

In

In conſequence of this ſcheme, the terrors of a parliamentary enquiry were hung over them. A judicature was aſſerted in parliament to try this queſtion. But, leſt this judicial character ſhould chance to inſpire certain ſtubborn ideas of law and right, it was argued, that the judicature was arbitrary, and ought not to determine by the rules of law, but by their opinion of policy and expediency. Nothing exceeded the violence of ſome of the managers, except their impotence. They were bewildered by their paſſions, and by their want of knowledge or want of conſideration of the ſubject. The more they advanced, the further they found themſelves from their object.—All things ran into confuſion. The miniſters quarrelled among themſelves. They diſclaimed one another. They ſuſpended violence, and ſhrunk from treaty. The inquiry was almoſt at its laſt gaſp; when ſome active perſons of the company were given to underſtand, that this hoſtile proceeding was only ſet up *in terrorem*; that government was far from an intention of ſeizing upon the poſſeſſions of the company. Adminiſtration, they ſaid, was ſenſible, that the idea was in every light full of abſurdity; and that ſuch a ſeizure was not more out of their power, than remote from their wiſhes; and therefore, if the company would come in a liberal manner to the houſe, they certainly could not fail of putting a ſpeedy end to this diſagreeable buſineſs, and of opening the way to an advantageous treaty.

On this hint the company acted: they came at once to a reſolution of getting rid of the difficulties which aroſe from the complication of their trade with their revenue; a ſtep which deſpoiled them of their beſt defenſive armour, and put them at once into the power of adminiſtration. They threw their whole ſtock of every kind, the revenues, the trade, and even their debt from government, into one fund, which they computed on the ſureſt grounds would amount to £.800.000, with a large probable ſurplus for the payment of debt. Then they agreed to divide this ſum in equal portions between themſelves and the public, £.400.000 to each. This gave to the proprietors of that fund an annual augmentation of no more than £.80.000 dividend. They ought to receive from government £.120.000 for the loan of their capital. So that in fact the whole, which on this plan they reſerved to themſelves, from their vaſt revenues, from their extenſive trade, and in conſideration of the great riſques and mighty expences which purchaſed

theſe advantages, amounted to no more than £.280.000, whilſt government was to receive, as I ſaid, £.400.000.

This propoſal was thought by themſelves liberal indeed; and they expected the higheſt applauſes for it. However, their reception was very different from their expectations. When they brought up their plan to the houſe of commons, the offer, as it was natural, of £.400.000, was very well reliſhed. But nothing could be more diſguſtful than the £.80.000 which the company had divided amongſt themſelves. A violent tempeſt of public indignation and fury roſe againſt them. The heads of people turned. The company was held well able to pay £.400.000 a year to government; but bankrupts, if they attempted to divide the fifth part of it among themſelves. An *ex poſt facto* law was brought in with great precipitation, for annulling this dividend. In the bill was inſerted a clauſe, which ſuſpended for about a year the right, which, under the public faith, the company enjoyed, of making their own dividends. Such was the diſpoſition and temper of the houſe, that, although the plain face of facts, reaſon, arithmetic, all the authority, parts, and eloquence in the kingdom, were againſt this bill; though all the chancellors of the exchequer, who had held that office from the beginning of this reign, oppoſed it, yet, a few placemen of the ſubordinate departments ſprung out of their ranks, took the lead, and, by an opinion *of ſome ſort of ſecret ſupport*, carried the bill with an high hand, leaving the then ſecretary of ſtate, and the chancellor of the exchequer, in a very moderate minority. In this diſtracted ſituation, the managers of the bill, notwithſtanding their triumph, did not venture to propoſe the payment of the civil liſt debt. The chancellor of the exchequer was not in good humour enough, after his late defeat by his own troops, to co-operate in ſuch a deſign; ſo they made an act, to lock up the money in the exchequer until they ſhould have time to look about them, and ſettle among themſelves what they are to do with it.

Thus ended this unparalleled tranſaction. The author, I believe, will not claim any part of the glory of it: he will leave it whole and entire to the authors of the meaſure. The money was the voluntary free gift of the company; the reſcinding bill was the act of legiſlature, to which they and we owe ſubmiſſion: the author has nothing to do with the one or with the other. However, he cannot avoid rubbing

bing himſelf againſt this ſubject, merely for the pleaſure of ſtirring controverſies, and gratifying a certain pruriency of taxation that ſeems to infect his blood. It is merely to indulge himſelf in ſpeculations of taxing, that he chooſes to harangue on this ſubject. For he takes credit for no greater ſum than the public is already in poſſeſſion of. He does not hint, that the company means, or has ever ſhewn any diſpoſition, if managed with common prudence, to pay leſs in future; and he cannot doubt that the preſent miniſtry are as well inclined to drive them, by their mock enquiries, and real reſcinding bills, as he can poſſibly be with his taxes. Beſides, it is obvious, that as great a ſum might have been drawn from that company, without affecting property, or ſhaking the conſtitution, or endangering the principle of public credit, or running into his golden dreams of cockets on the Ganges, or viſions of ſtamp duties on *Perwanna's*, *Duſtucks*, *Kiſtbundees*, and *Huſbulbookums*. For once, I will diſappoint him in this part of the diſpute, and only in a very few words recommend to his conſideration, how he is to get off the dangerous idea of taxing a public fund, if he levies thoſe duties in England; and if he is to levy them in India, what proviſion he has made for a revenue eſtabliſhment there; ſuppoſing that he undertakes this new ſcheme of finance independently of the company, and againſt its inclinations.

So much for the revenues, which are nothing but his viſions, or already the national poſſeſſions without any act of his. It is eaſy to parade with an high talk of parliamentary rights, of the univerſality of legiſlative powers, and of uniform taxation. Men of ſenſe, when new projects come before them, always think, a diſcourſe proving the mere right or mere power of acting in the manner propoſed, to be no more than a very unpleaſant way of miſpending time. They muſt ſee the object to be of proper magnitude to engage them; they muſt ſee the means of compaſſing it to be next to certain; the miſchiefs not to counterbalance the profit; they will examine how a propoſed impoſition or regulation agrees with the opinions of thoſe who are likely to be affected by it; they will not deſpiſe the conſideration even of their habitudes and prejudices. They wiſh to know how it accords or diſagrees with the true ſpirit of prior eſtabliſhments, whether of government or of finance; becauſe they well know, that in the complicated oeconomy of great kingdoms, and immenſe revenues, which, in a

length of time, and by a variety of accidents, have coaleſced into a ſort of body, an attempt towards a compulſory equality in all circumſtances, and an exact practical definition of the ſupreme rights in every caſe, is the moſt dangerous and chimerical of all enterprizes. The old building ſtands well enough, though part Gothic, part Grecian, and part Chineſe, until an attempt is made to ſquare it into uniformity. Then it may come down upon our heads all together in much uniformity of ruin; and great will be the fall thereof. Some people, inſtead of inclining to debate the matter, only feel a ſort of nauſea, when they are told, that "protection calls for ſupply," and that "all the parts "ought to contribute to the ſupport of the whole." Strange argument for great and grave deliberation! As if the ſame end may not, and muſt not be compaſſed according to its circumſtances, by a great diverſity of ways. Thus in Great Britain ſome of our eſtabliſhments are apt for the ſupport of credit. They ſtand therefore upon a principle of their own, diſtinct from, and in ſome reſpects contrary to, the relation between prince and ſubject. It is a new ſpecies of contract ſuperinduced upon the old contract of the ſtate. The idea of power muſt as much as poſſible be baniſhed from it; for power and credit are things adverſe, incompatible, *Non bene conveniunt, nec in una ſede morantur.* Such eſtabliſhments are our great *monied* companies. To tax them would be critical and dangerous, and contradictory to the very purpoſe of their inſtitution; which is credit, and cannot therefore be taxation. But the nation, when it gave up that power, did not give up the advantage; but ſuppoſed, and with reaſon, that government was overpaid in credit for what it ſeemed to loſe in authority. In ſuch a caſe, to talk of the rights of ſovereignty, is quite idle. Other eſtabliſhments ſupply other modes of public contribution. Our *trading* companies, as well as individual importers, are a fit ſubject of a revenue by cuſtoms. Some eſtabliſhments pay us by a *monopoly* of their conſumption and their produce. This, nominally no tax, in reality comprehends all taxes. Such eſtabliſhments are our colonies. To tax them, would be as erroneous in policy, as rigorous in equity. Ireland ſupplies us by furniſhing troops in war; and by bearing part of our foreign eſtabliſhment in peace. She aids us at all times by the money that her abſentees ſpend amongſt us; which is no ſmall part of the rental of that kingdom. Thus Ireland contributes

butes her part. Sone objects bear port duties. Some are fitter for an inland excise. The mode varies, the object is the same. To strain these from their old and inveterate leanings might impair the old benefit, and not answer the end of the new project. Among all the great men of antiquity, *Procrustes* shall never be my hero of legislation; with his iron bed, the allegory of his government, and the type of some modern policy, by which the long limb was to be cut short, and the short tortured into length. Such was this state bed of uniformity! He would, I conceive, be a very indifferent farmer, who complained that his sheep did not plough, or his horses yield him wool; though it would be an idea full of equality. They may think this right in rustic oeconomy, who think it available in the politic;

*Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi!*
*Atque idem jungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.*

As the author has stated this Indian taxation for no visible purpose relative to his plan of supply; so he has stated many other projects with as little, if any distinct end; unless perhaps to shew you how full he is of projects for the public good; and what vast expectations may be formed of him or his friends, if they should be translated into administration. It is always from some opinion that these speculations may one day become our public measures, that I think it worth while to trouble the reader at all about them.

Two of them stand out in high relievo beyond the rest. The first is a change in the internal representation of this country, by enlarging our number of constituents. The second is an addition to our representatives, by new American members of parliament. I pass over here all considerations how far such a system will be an improvement of our constitution according to any sound theory. Not that I mean to condemn such speculative enquiries concerning this great object of the national attention. They may tend to clear doubtful points, and possibly may lead, as they have often done, to real improvements. What I object to, is their introduction into a discourse relating to the immediate state of our affairs, and recommending plans of practical government. In this view, I see nothing in them but what is usual with the author; an attempt to raise discontent in the people of England, to balance those discontents the measures of his friends had already raised in America.

What other reaſon can he have for ſuggeſting, that we are not happy enough to enjoy a ſufficient number of voters in England? I believe that moſt ſober thinkers on this ſubject are rather of opinion, that our fault is on the other ſide; and that it would be more in the ſpirit of our conſtitution, and more agreeable to the pattern of our beſt laws, by leſſening the number, to add to the weight and independency of our voters. And truly, conſidering the immenſe and dangerous charge of elections; the proſtitute and daring venality, the corruption of manners, the idleneſs and profligacy of the lower ſort of voters, no prudent man would propoſe to encreaſe ſuch an evil, if it be, as I fear it is, out of our power to adminiſter to it any remedy. The author propoſes nothing further. If he has any improvements that may balance or may leſſen this inconvenience, he has thought proper to keep them as uſual in his own breaſt. Since he has been ſo reſerved, I ſhould have wiſhed he had been as cautious with regard to the project itſelf. Firſt, becauſe he obſerves juſtly, that this ſcheme, however it might improve the platform, can add nothing to the authority of the legiſlature; much I fear it will have a contrary operation. For, authority depending on opinion at leaſt as much as on duty, an idea circulated among the people that our conſtitution is not ſo perfect as it ought to be, before you are ſure of mending it, is a certain method of leſſening it in the public opinion. Of this irreverent opinion of parliament, the author himſelf complains in one part of his book; and he endeavours to encreaſe it in the other. Has he well conſidered what an immenſe operation any change in our conſtitution is? how many diſcuſſions, parties, and paſſions, it will neceſſarily excite; and when you open it to enquiry in one part, where the enquiry will ſtop? Experience ſhews us, that no time can be fit for ſuch changes but a time of general confuſion; when good men, finding every thing already broke up, think it right to take advantage of the opportunity of ſuch derangement in favour of an uſeful alteration. Perhaps a time of the greateſt ſecurity and tranquillity both at home and abroad may likewiſe be fit; but will the author affirm this to be juſt ſuch a time? Transferring an idea of military to civil prudence, he ought to know how dangerous it is to make an alteration of your diſpoſition in the face of an enemy.

Now comes his American repreſentation. Here too, as uſual, he takes no notice of any difficulty, or propoſes any ſort

ſort of ſolution. He throws you his politics, as he does his revenue; do you make ſomething of them if you can. Is not the reader a little aſtoniſhed at the propoſal of an American repreſentation from that quarter? It is propoſed merely as a project of ſpeculative improvement; not from the neceſſity in the caſe, not to add any thing to the authority of parliament: but that we may afford a greater attenſion to the concerns of the Americans, and give them a better opportunity of ſtating their grievances, and of obtaining redreſs. I am glad to find the author has at length diſcovered, that we have not given a ſufficient attention to their concerns, or a proper redreſs to their grievances. [illegible] great friend would once have been exceedingly diſpleaſed with any perſon, who ſhould tell him, that he did not attend ſufficiently to thoſe concerns. He thought he did ſo, when he regulated the colonies over and over again: he thought he did ſo, when he formed two general ſyſtems of revenue; one of port-duties, and the other of internal taxation. Theſe ſyſtems ſuppoſed, or ought to ſuppoſe, the greateſt attention to, and the moſt detailed information of, all their affairs. However, by contending for the American repreſentation, he ſeems at laſt driven virtually to admit, that great caution ought to be uſed in the exerciſe of *all* our legiſlative rights over an object ſo remote from our eye, and ſo little connected with our immediate feelings; that in prudence we ought not be quite ſo ready with our taxes, until we can ſecure the deſired repreſentation in parliament. Perhaps it may be ſome time before this hopeful ſcheme can be brought to perfect maturity; although the author ſeems to be no wiſe aware of any obſtructions that lie in the way of it. He talks of his union, juſt as he does of his taxes and his ſavings, with as much *ſang froid* and eaſe, as if his wiſh and the enjoyment were exactly the ſame thing. He appears not to have troubled his head with the infinite difficulty of ſettling that repreſentation on a fair balance of wealth and numbers throughout the ſeveral provinces of America and the Weſt-Indies, under ſuch an infinite variety of circumſtances. It coſts him nothing to fight with nature, and to conquer the order of Providence, which manifeſtly oppoſes itſelf to the poſſibility of ſuch a parliamentary union.

But let us, to indulge his paſſion for projects and power, ſuppoſe the happy time arrived, when the author comes into the miniſtry, and is to realiſe his ſpeculations. The

writs are iſſued for electing members for America and the Weſt-Indies. Some provinces receive them in ſix weeks, ſome in ten, ſome in twenty. A veſſel may be loſt, and then ſome provinces may not receive them at all. But let it be, that they all receive them at once, and in the ſhorteſt time. A proper ſpace muſt be given for proclamation and for the election; ſome weeks at leaſt. But the members are choſen, and if ſhips are ready to ſail, in about ſix more they arrive in London. In the mean time the parliament has ſat, and buſineſs far advanced without American repreſentatives. Nay, by this time, it may happen, that the parliament is diſſolved; and then the members ſhip themſelves again, to be again elected. The writs may arrive in America, before the poor members of a parliament in which they never ſat, can arrive at their ſeveral provinces. A new intereſt is formed, and they find other members are choſen whilſt they are on the high ſeas. But if the writs and members arrive together, here is at beſt a new trial of ſkill amongſt the candidates, after one ſet of them have well aired themſelves with their two voyages of 6000 miles.

However, in order to facilitate every thing to the author, we will ſuppoſe them all once more elected, and ſteering again to old England with a good heart, and a fair weſterly wind in their ſtern. On their arrival, they find all in a hurry and buſtle; in and out; condolence and congratulation; the crown is demiſed. Another parliament is to be called. Away back to America again on a fourth voyage, and to a third election. Does the author mean to make our kings as immortal in their perſonal as in their politic character? Or, whilſt he bountifully adds to their life, will he take from them their prerogative of diſſolving parliaments, in favour of American union? Or are the American repreſentatives to be perpetual, and to feel neither demiſes of the crown, nor diſſolutions of parliament?

But theſe things may be granted to him without bringing him much nearer to his point. What does he think of re-election? is the American member the only one who is not to take a place, or the only one to be exempted from the ceremony of re-election? How will this great politician preſerve the rights of electors, the fairneſs of returns, and the privilege of the houſe of commons, as the ſole judge of ſuch conteſts? It would undoubtedly be a glorious ſight to have eight or ten petitions or double returns, from Boſ-

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ton and Barbadoes, from Philadelphia and Jamaica, the members returned, and the petitioners with all their train of attornies, ſolicitors, mayors, ſelect-men, provoſt marſhals, and about five hundred or a thouſand witneſſes, come to the bar of the houſe of commons. Poſſibly we might be interrupted in the enjoyment of this pleaſing ſpectacle, if a war ſhould break out, and our conſtitutional fleet, loaded with members of parliament, returning officers, petitioners, and witneſſes, the electors and elected, ſhould become a prize to the French, or Spaniards, and be conveyed to Carthagena, or to La vera Cruz, and from thence perhaps to Mexico or Lima, there to remain until a cartel for members of parliament can be ſettled, or until the war is ended.

In truth, the author has little ſtudied this buſineſs, or he might have known, that ſome of the moſt conſiderable provinces of America, ſuch for inſtance as Connecticut and Maſſachuſets Bay, have not in each of them, two men who can afford, at a diſtance from their eſtates, to ſpend a thouſand pounds a year. How can theſe provinces be repreſented at Weſtminſter? If their province pays them, they are American agents, with ſalaries, and not independent members of parliament. It is true, that formerly in England members had ſalaries from their conſtituents; but they all had ſalaries, and were all, in this way, upon a par. If theſe American repreſentatives have no ſalaries, then they muſt add to the liſt of our penſioners and dependents at court, or they muſt ſtarve. There is no alternative.

Enough of this viſionary union; in which much extravagance appears without any fancy, and the judgment is ſhocked without any thing to refreſh the imagination. It looks as if the author had dropped down from the moon, without any knowledge of the general nature of this globe, of the general nature of its inhabitants, without the leaſt acquaintance with the affairs of this country. Governor Pownal has handled the ſame ſubject. To do him juſtice, he treats it upon far more rational principles of ſpeculation; and much more like a man of buſineſs. He thinks (erroneouſly, I conceive) but he does think, that our legiſlative rights are incomplete without ſuch a repreſentation. It is no wonder, therefore, that he endeavours by every means to obtain it. Not like our author, who is always on velvet, he is aware of ſome difficulties; and he propoſes ſome ſolutions. But nature is too hard for both theſe authors; and

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America is, and ever will be, without actual repreſentation in the houſe of commons: nor will any miniſter be wild enough even to propoſe ſuch a repreſentation in parliament; however he may chooſe to throw out that project, together with others equally far from his real opinions, and remote from his deſigns, merely to fall in with the different views, and captivate the affections, of different ſorts of men.

Whether theſe projects ariſe from the author's real political principles; or are only brought out in ſubſervience to his political views, they compoſe the whole of any thing that is like preciſe and definite, which the author has given us to expect from that adminiſtration which is ſo much the ſubject of his praiſes and prayers. As to his general propoſitions, that "there is a deal of difference between "impoſſibilities and great difficulties;" "that a great "ſcheme cannot be carried unleſs made the buſineſs of "ſucceſſive adminiſtrations;" that "virtuous and able "men are the fitteſt to ſerve their country;" all this I look on no more than ſo much rubble to fill up the ſpaces between the regular maſonry. Pretty much in the ſame light, I cannot forbear conſidering his detached obſervations on commerce; ſuch as, that "the ſyſtem for colony "regulations would be very ſimple, and mutually benefi-"cial to Great Britain and her colonies, if the old navi-"gation laws were adhered to." That "the tranſporta-"tion ſhould be in all caſes in ſhips belonging to Britiſh "ſubjects." That "even Britiſh ſhips ſhould not be *ge-"nerally* received into the colonies from any part of Eu-"rope, except the dominions of Great-Britain."—That "it is unreaſonable that corn and ſuch like products ſhould "be reſtrained to come firſt to a Britiſh port." What do all theſe fine obſervations ſignify? ſome of them condemn as ill practices, things that never were practiſed at all. Some recommend to be done, things that always have been done. Others indeed convey, though obliquely and looſely, ſome inſinuations highly dangerous to our commerce. If I could prevail on myſelf to think the author meant to ground any practice upon theſe general propoſitions, I ſhould think it very neceſſary to aſk a few queſtions about ſome of them. For inſtance, what does he mean by talking of an adherence to the old navigation laws? Does he mean, that the particular law, 12 Car. II, c. 19, commonly called the act of navigation, is to be adhered to, and

and that the ſeveral ſubſequent additions, amendments, and exceptions, ought to be all repealed? If ſo, he will make a ſtrange havock in the whole ſyſtem of our trade laws, which have been univerſally acknowledged to be full as well founded in the alterations and exceptions, as the act of Charles the Second, in the original proviſions; and to purſue full as wiſely, the great end of that very politic law, the encreaſe of the Britiſh navigation. I fancy the writer could haruly propoſe any thing more alarming to thoſe immediately intereſted in that navigation than ſuch a repeal. If he does not mean this, he has got no farther than a nugatory propoſition, which nobody can contradict, and for which no man is the wiſer.

That "the regulations for the colony trade would be "few and ſimple if the old navigation laws were adhered to," I utterly deny as a fact. That they ought to be ſo, ſounds well enough; but this propoſition is of the ſame nugatory nature with ſome of the former. The regulations for the colony trade ought not to be more nor fewer, nor more or leſs complex, than the occaſion requires. And, as that trade is in a great meaſure a ſyſtem of art and reſtriction, they can be neither few nor ſimple. It is true, that the very principle may be deſtroyed by multiplying to exceſs the means of ſecuring it. Never did a miniſter depart more from the author's ideas of ſimplicity, or more embarraſs the trade of America with the multiplicity and intricacy of regulations and ordinances, than his boaſted miniſter of 1764. That miniſter ſeemed to be poſſeſſed with ſomething, hardly ſhort of a rage, for regulation and reſtriction. He had ſo multiplied bonds, certificates, affidavits, warrants, ſufferances, and cockets, had ſupported them with ſuch ſevere penalties, and extended them without the leaſt conſideration of circumſtances to ſo many objects, that, had they all continued in their original force, commerce muſt ſpeedily have expired under them. Some of them, the miniſtry which gave them birth, was obliged to deſtroy: with their own hand they ſigned the condemnation of their own regulations; confeſſing in ſo many words, in the preamble of their act of the 5th Geo. III. that ſome of theſe regulations had laid *an unneceſſary reſtraint on the trade and correſpondence of his Majeſty's American ſubjects.* This, in that miniſtry, was a candid confeſſion of a miſtake; but every alteration made in thoſe regulations by their ſucceſſors, is to be the effect of envy, and

and American misrepresentation. So much for the author's simplicity in regulation.

I have now gone through all which I think immediately essential in the author's ideas of war, of peace, of the comparative states of England and France, of our actual situation; of his projects of œconomy, of finance, of commerce, and of constitutional improvement. There remains nothing now to be considered, except his heavy censures upon the administration which was formed in 1765; which is commonly known by the name of the Marquis of Rockingham's administration, as the administration which preceded it is by that of Mr. Grenville. These censures relate chiefly to three heads: 1. To the repeal of the American stamp-act. 2. To the commercial regulations then made. 3. To the course of foreign negotiations during that short period.

A person who knew nothing of public affairs but from the writings of this author, would be led to conclude, that, at the time of the change in June 1765, some well-digested system of administration, founded in national strength, and in the affections of the people, proceeding in all points with the most reverential and tender regard to the laws, and pursuing with equal wisdom and success every thing which could tend to the internal prosperity, and to the external honour and dignity of this country, had been all at once subverted by an irruption of a sort of wild, licentious, unprincipled invaders, who wantonly, and with a barbarous rage, had defaced a thousand fair monuments of the constitutional and political skill of their predecessors. It is natural indeed that this author should have some dislike to the administration which was formed in 1765. Its views in most things were different from those of his friends; in some, altogether opposite to them. It is impossible that both of these administrations should be the objects of public esteem. Their different principles compose some of the strongest political lines which discriminate the parties even now subsisting amongst us. The ministers of 1764 are not indeed followed by very many in their opposition; yet a large part of the people now in office entertain, or pretend to entertain, sentiments entirely conformable to theirs; whilst some of the former colleagues of the ministry which was formed in 1765, however they may have abandoned the connexion, and contradicted by their conduct the principles of their former friends, pretend,

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on their parts, ſtill to adhere to the ſame maxims. All the leſſer diviſions, which are indeed rather names of perſonal attachment than of party diſtinction, fall in with the one or the other of theſe leading parties.

I intend to ſtate as ſhortly as I am able, the general condition of public affairs, and the diſpoſition of the minds of men, at the time of the remarkable change of ſyſtem in 1765. The reader will have thereby a more diſtinct view of the comparative merits of theſe ſeveral plans, and will receive more ſatisfaction concerning the ground and reaſon of the meaſures which were then purſued, than, I believe, can be derived from the peruſal of thoſe partial repreſentations contained in the State of the Nation, and the other writings of thoſe who have continued, for now near three years, in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the preſs. This will, I hope, be ſome apology for my dwelling a little on this part of the ſubject.

On the reſignation of the Earl of Bute, in 1763, our affairs had been delivered into the hands of three miniſters of his recommendation; Mr. Grenville, the Earl of Egremont, and the Earl of Halifax. This arrangement, notwithſtanding the retirement of Lord Bute, announced to the publick a continuance of the ſame meaſures; nor was there more reaſon to expect a change from the death of the Earl of Egremont. The Earl of Sandwich ſupplied his place. The Duke of Bedford, and the gentlemen who act in that connexion, and whoſe general character and politics were ſufficiently underſtood, added to the ſtrength of the miniſtry, without making any alteration in their plan of conduct. Such was the conſtitution of the miniſtry which was changed in 1765.

As to their politics, the principles of the peace of Paris governed in foreign affairs. In domeſtic, the ſame ſcheme prevailed, of contradicting the opinions, and diſgracing moſt of the perſons, who had been countenanced and employed in the late reign. The inclinations of the people were little attended to; and a diſpoſition to the uſe of forcible methods ran through the whole tenour of adminiſtration. The nation in general was uneaſy and diſſatisfied. Sober men ſaw cauſes for it in the conſtitution of the miniſtry, and the conduct of the miniſters. The miniſters, who have uſually a ſhort method on ſuch occaſions, attributed their unpopularity wholly to the efforts of faction. However this might be, the licentiouſneſs and tumults of

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the common people, and the contempt of government, of which our author ſo often and ſo bitterly complains, as owing to the miſmanagement of the ſubſequent adminiſtrations, had at no time riſen to a greater or a more dangerous height. The meaſures taken to ſuppreſs that ſpirit, were as violent and licentious as the ſpirit itſelf; injudicious, precipitate, and ſome of them illegal. Inſtead of allaying, they tended infinitely to inflame the diſtemper; and whoever will be at the leaſt pains to examine, will find thoſe meaſures, not only the cauſes of the tumults which then prevailed, but the real ſources of almoſt all the diſorders which have ariſen ſince that time: more intent on making a victim to party, than an example of juſtice, they blundered in the method of purſuing their vengeance. By this means a diſcovery was made of many practices, common indeed in the office of ſecretary of ſtate, but wholly repugnant to our laws, and the genius of the Engliſh conſtitution. One of the worſt of theſe was, the wanton and indiſcriminate ſeizure of papers, even in caſes where the ſafety of the ſtate was not pretended in juſtification of ſo harſh a proceeding. The temper of the miniſtry had excited a jealouſy, which made the people more than commonly vigilant, concerning every power which was exerciſed by government. The abuſe, however ſanctioned by cuſtom, was evident; but the miniſtry, inſtead of reſting in a prudent inactivity, or (what would have been ſtill more prudent) taking the lead, in quieting the minds of the people, and aſcertaining the law upon thoſe delicate points, made uſe of the whole influence of government to prevent a parliamentary reſolution againſt the practices of office. And leſt the colourable reaſons, offered in argument againſt this parliamentary procedure, ſhould be miſtaken for the real motives of their conduct, all the advantage of privilege, all the arts and fineſſes of pleading, and great ſums of public money, were laviſhed, to prevent any deciſion upon thoſe practices in the courts of juſtice. In the mean time, in order to weaken, ſince they could not immediately deſtroy, the liberty of the preſs, the privilege of parliament was voted away in all accuſations for a ſeditious libel. The freedom of debate in parliament itſelf was no leſs menaced. Officers of the army, of long and meritorious ſervice, and of ſmall fortunes, were choſen as victims for a ſingle vote; by an exertion of miniſterial power, which had been very rarely uſed, and which is extreme-

extremely unjuſt, as depriving men not only of a place, but a profeſſion, and is indeed of the moſt pernicious example both in a civil and a military light.

Whilſt all things were managed at home with ſuch a ſpirit of diſorderly deſpotiſm; abroad there was a proportionable abatement of all ſpirit. Some of our moſt juſt and valuable claims were in a manner abandoned. This indeed ſeemed not very inconſiſtent conduct in the miniſters who had made the treaty of Paris. With regard to our domeſtic affairs, there was no want of induſtry; but there was a great deficiency of temper, and judgment, and manly comprehenſion of the public intereſt. The nation certainly wanted relief, and government attempted to adminiſter it. Two ways were principally choſen for this great purpoſe. The firſt by regulation; the ſecond by new funds of revenue. Agreeably to this plan, a new naval eſtabliſhment was formed at a good deal of expence, and to little effect, to aid in the collection of the cuſtoms. Regulation was added to regulation; and the ſtricteſt and moſt unreſerved orders was given, for a prevention of all contraband trade here, and in every part of America. A teazing cuſtom-houſe, and a multiplicity of perplexing regulations, ever have, and ever will appear, the maſter-piece of finance to people of narrow views; as a paper againſt ſmuggling, and the importation of French finery, never fails of furniſhing a very popular column in a news-paper.

The greateſt part of theſe regulations were made for America; and they fell ſo indiſcriminately on all ſorts of contraband, or ſuppoſed contraband, that ſome of the moſt valuable branches of trade were driven violently from our ports; which cauſed an univerſal conſternation throughout the colonies. Every part of the trade was infinitely diſtreſſed by them. Men of war now for the firſt time, armed with regular commiſſions of cuſtom-houſe officers, inveſted the coaſts, and gave to the collection of revenue the air of hoſtile contribution. About the ſame time that theſe regulations ſeemed to threaten the deſtruction of the only trade from whence the plantations derived any ſpecie, an act was made, putting a ſtop to the future emiſſion of paper currency, which uſed to ſupply its place among them. Hand in hand with this went another act for obliging the colonies to provide quarters for ſoldiers. Inſtantly followed another law, for levying throughout all America new port duties, upon a vaſt variety of commodities

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of their consumption, and some of which lay heavy upon objects necessary for their trade and fishery. Immediately upon the heels of these, and amidst the uneasiness and confusion produced by a crowd of new impositions and regulations, some good, some evil, some doubtful, all crude and ill-considered, came another act, for imposing an universal stamp-duty on the colonies: and this was declared to be little more than an experiment, and a foundation of future revenue. To render these proceedings the more irritating to the colonies, the principal argument used in favour of their ability to pay such duties, was the liberality of the grants of their assemblies during the late war. Never could any argument be more insulting and mortifying to a people habituated to the granting of their own money.

Taxes for the purpose of raising revenue had hitherto been sparingly attempted in America. Without ever doubting the extent of its lawful power, parliament always doubted the propriety of such impositions. And the Americans on their part never thought of contesting a right by which they were so little affected. Their assemblies in the main answered all the purposes necessary to the internal oeconomy of a free people, and provided for all the exigences of government which arose amongst themselves. In the midst of that happy enjoyment, they never thought of critically settling the exact limits of a power which was necessary to their union, their safety, their equality, and even their liberty. Thus the two very difficult points, superiority in the presiding state, and freedom in the subordinate, were on the whole sufficiently, that is, practically, reconciled; without agitating those vexatious questions, which in truth, rather belong to metaphysicks than politics, and which can never be moved without shaking the foundations of the best governments that have ever been constituted by human wisdom. By this measure was let loose that dangerous spirit of disquisition, not in the coolness of philosophical enquiry, but enflamed with all the passions of an haughty resentful people, who thought themselves deeply injured, and that they were contending for every thing that was valuable in the world.

In England, our ministers went on without the least attention to these alarming dispositions; just as if they were doing the most common things, in the most usual way, and among a people not only passive, but pleased. They took no one step to divert the dangerous spirit, which began

began even then to appear in the colonies, to compromiſe with it, to mollify it, or to ſubdue it. No new arrangements were made in civil government; no new powers or inſtructions were given to governors; no augmentation was made, or new diſpoſition, of forces. Never was ſo critical a meaſure purſued with ſo little proviſion againſt its neceſſary conſequences. As if all common prudence had abandoned the miniſters, and as if they meant to plunge themſelves and us headlong into that gulph which ſtood gaping before them, by giving a year's notice of the project of their ſtamp act, they allowed time for all the diſcontents of that country to feſter and come to a head, and for all the arrangements which factious men could make towards an oppoſition to the law. At the ſame time they carefully concealed from the eye of parliament, thoſe remonſtrances which they had actually received; and which in the ſtrongeſt manner indicated the diſcontent of ſome of the colonies, and the conſequences which might be expected; they concealed them, even in defiance of an order of council, that they ſhould be laid before parliament. Thus, by concealing the true ſtate of the caſe, they rendered the wiſdom of the nation as improvident as their own temerity, either in preventing or guarding againſt the miſchief. It has indeed, from the beginning to this hour, been the uniform policy of this ſet of men, in order at any hazard to obtain a preſent credit, to propoſe whatever might be pleaſing, as attended with no difficulty; and afterwards to throw all the diſappointment of the wild expectations they had raiſed, upon thoſe who have the hard taſk of freeing the publick from the conſequences of their pernicious projects.

Whilſt the commerce and tranquillity, of the whole empire were ſhaken in this manner, our affairs grew ſtill more diſtracted by the internal diſſentions of our miniſters. Treachery and ingratitude were charged from one ſide; deſpotiſm and tyranny from the other; the vertigo of the regency bill; the awkward reception of the ſilk bill in the houſe of commons, and the inconſiderate and abrupt rejection of it in the houſe of lords; the ſtrange and violent tumults which aroſe in conſequence, and which were rendered more ſerious, by being charged by the miniſters upon one another; the report of a groſs and brutal treatment of the ——, by a miniſtry at the ſame time odious to the people, all conſpired to leave the publick, at the cloſe of

the ſeſſion of 1765, in as critical and perilous a ſituation, as ever the nation was, or could be, in a time when ſhe was not immediately threatened by her neighbours.

It was at this time, and in theſe circumſtances, that a new adminiſtration was formed. Profeſſing even induſtriouſly, in this public matter, to avoid anecdotes; I ſay nothing of thoſe famous reconciliations and quarrels, which weakened the body that ſhould have been the natural ſupport of this adminiſtration. I run no riſque in affirming, that, ſurrounded as they were with difficulties of every ſpecies, nothing but the ſtrongeſt and moſt uncorrupt ſenſe of their duty to the public could have prevailed upon ſome of the perſons who compoſed it to undertake the king's buſineſs at ſuch a time. Their preceding character, their meaſures while in power, and the ſubſequent conduct of many of them, I think, leave no room to charge this aſſertion to flattery. Having undertaken the commonwealth, what remained for them to do? to piece their conduct upon the broken chain of former meaſures? If they had been ſo inclined, the ruinous nature of thoſe meaſures which began inſtantly to appear, would not have permitted it. Scarcely had they entered into office, when letters arrived from all parts of America, making loud complaints backed by ſtrong reaſons, againſt ſeveral of the principal regulations of the late miniſtry, as threatening deſtruction to many valuable branches of commerce. Theſe were attended with repreſentations from many merchants, and capital manufacturers at home, who had all their intereſts involved in the ſupport of lawful trade, and in the ſuppreſſion of every ſort of contraband. Whilſt theſe things were under conſideration, that conflagration blazed out at once in North America, an univerſal diſobedience, and open reſiſtance to the ſtamp act; and, in conſequence, an univerſal ſtop to the courſe of juſtice, and to trade and navigation, throughout that great important country; an interval during which the trading intereſt of England lay under the moſt dreadful anxiety which it ever felt.

The repeal of that act was propoſed. It was much too ſerious a meaſure, and attended with too many difficulties upon every ſide, for the then miniſtry to have undertaken it, as ſome paltry writers have aſſerted, from envy and diſlike to their predeceſſors in office. As little could it be owing to perſonal cowardice, and dread of conſequences to themſelves. Miniſters, timorous from their attachment to place

place and power, will fear more from the conſequences of one court intrigue, than from a thouſand difficulties to the commerce and credit of their country, by diſturbances at three thouſand miles diſtance. From which of theſe the miniſters had moſt to apprehend at that time, is known, I preſume, univerſally. Nor did they take that reſolution from a want of the fulleſt ſenſe of the inconveniencies which muſt neceſſarily attend a meaſure of conceſſion from the ſovereign to the ſubject. That it muſt encreaſe the inſolence of the mutinous ſpirits in America, was but too obvious. No great meaſure indeed, at a very difficult criſis, can be purſued, which is not attended with ſome miſchief; none but conceited pretenders in public buſineſs will hold any other language; and none but weak and unexperienced men will believe them, if they ſhould. If we were found in ſuch a criſis, let thoſe whoſe bold deſigns, and whoſe defective arrangements, brought us into it, anſwer for the conſequences. The buſineſs of the then miniſtry evidently was, to take ſuch ſteps, not as the wiſhes of our autnor, or as their own wiſhes dictated, but as the bad ſituation in which their predeceſſors had left them abſolutely required.

The diſobedience to this act was univerſal throughout America; nothing, it was evident, but the ſending a very ſtrong military, backed by a very ſtrong naval force, would reduce the ſeditious to obedience. To ſend it to one town, would not be ſufficient; every province of America muſt be traverſed, and mut be ſubdued. I do not entertain the leaſt doubt but this could be done. We might, I think, without much difficulty have deſtroyed our colonies. This deſtruction might be effected, probably in a year, or in two at the utmoſt. If the queſtion was upon a foreign nation, where every ſucceſsful ſtroke adds to your own power, and takes from that of a rival, a juſt war with ſuch a certain ſuperiority would be undoubtedly an adviſeable meaſure. But *four millions* of debt due to our merchants, the total ceſſation of a trade annually worth *four millions* more, a large foreign traffick, much home manufacture, a very capital immediate revenue ariſing from colony imports, indeed the produce of every one of our revenues greatly depending on this trade, all theſe were very weighty accumulated conſiderations, at leaſt well to be weighed, before that ſword was drawn, which even by its victories muſt produce all the evil effects of the greateſt national defeat.

How public credit muſt have ſuffered, I need not ſay. If the condition of the nation, at the cloſe of our foreign war, was what this author repreſents it, ſuch a civil war would have been a bad couch on which to repoſe our wearied virtue. Far from being able to have entered into new plans of œconomy, we muſt have launched into a new ſea, I fear a boundleſs ſea, of expence. Such an addition of debt, with ſuch a diminution of revenue and trade, would have left us in no want of a *State of the Nation* to aggravate the picture of our diſtreſſes.

Our trade felt this to its vitals: and our then miniſters were not aſhamed to ſay, that they ſympathiſed with the feelings of our merchants. The univerſal alarm of the whole trading body of England will never be laughed at by them as an ill-grounded or a pretended panick. The univerſal deſire of that body will always have great weight with them in every conſideration connected with commerce; neither ought the opinion of that body be ſlighted (notwithſtanding the contemptuous and indecent language of this author, and his aſſociates), in any conſideration whatſoever, of revenue. Nothing amongſt us is more quickly or deeply affected by taxes of any kind, than trade; and if an American tax was a real relief to England, no part of the community would be ſooner, or more materially, relieved by it than our merchants. But they well know that the trade of England muſt be more burthened by one penny raiſed in America, than by three in England; and if that penny be raiſed with the uneaſineſs, the diſcontent, and the confuſion of America, more than by ten.

If the opinion and wiſh of the landed intereſt is a motive, and it is a fair and juſt one, for taking away a real and a large revenue, the deſire of the trading intereſt of England ought to be a juſt ground for taking away a tax, of little better than ſpeculation, which was to be collected by a war, which was to be kept up with the perpetual diſcontent of thoſe who were to be affected by it, and the value of whoſe produce, even after the *ordinary* charges of collection, was very uncertain[u]; after the *extraordinary*, the

[u] It is obſervable, that the partizans of American taxation, when they have a mind to repreſent this tax as wonderfully beneficial to England, ſtate it as worth £. 100,000 a year; when they are to repreſent it as very light on the Americans, it dwindles to £. 60000. Indeed it is very difficult to compute what its produce might have been.

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dearest purchased revenue that ever was made by any nation.

These were some of the motives drawn from principles of convenience for that repeal. When the object came to be more narrowly inspected, every motive concurred. These colonies were evidently founded in subservience to the commerce of Great Britain. From this principle, the whole system of our laws concerning them became a system of restriction. A double monopoly was established on the part of the parent country; 1. a monopoly of their whole import, which is to be altogether from Great Britain; 2. a monopoly of all their export, which is to be no where but to Great Britain, as far as it can serve any purpose here. On the same idea it was contrived that they should send all their products to us raw, and in their first state; and that they should take every thing from us in the last stage of manufacture.

Were ever a people under such circumstances, that is, a people who were to export raw, and receive manufactured, and this, not a few luxurious articles, but all articles, even to those of the grossest, most vulgar, and necessary consumption, a people who were in the hands of a general monopolist, were ever such a people suspected of a possibility of becoming a just object of revenue? All the ends of their foundation must be supposed utterly contradicted before they could become such an object. Every trade-law we have made must have been eluded, and become useless, before they could be in such a condition.

The partizans of the new system, who, on most occasions, take credit for full as much knowledge as they possess, think proper on this occasion to counterfeit an extraordinary degree of ignorance, and in consequence of it to assert "that the balance (between the colonies and Great "Britain) is unknown, and that no important conclusion "can be drawn from premises so uncertain." Now to what can this ignorance be owing? were the navigation laws made, that this balance should be unknown? is it from the course of exchange that it is unknown, which all the world knows to be greatly and perpetually against the colonies? is it from the doubtful nature of the trade we carry on with the colonies? are not these schemists well apprized, that the colonists, particularly those of the northern provinces, import more from Great Britain, ten times more, than they send in return to us? That a great part of their foreign

balance is, and muſt be, remitted to London? I ſhall be ready to admit that the colonies ought to be taxed to the revenues of this country, when I know that they are out of debt to its commerce. This author will furniſh ſome ground to his theories, and communicate a diſcovery to the publick, if he can ſhew this, by any medium. But he tells us, "that their ſeas are covered with ſhips, and their rivers "floating with commerce." This is ſtill true. But it is with *our* ſhips that they are covered; and they float with Britiſh commerce. The American merchants are our factors; all in reality, moſt even in name. They trade, they navigate, they cultivate with Engliſh capitals; to their own advantage, to be ſure; for without theſe capitals their ploughs would be ſtopped, and their ſhips wind-bound. But he who employs the capital muſt, on the whole, be the perſon principally benefited; the perſon who works upon it, profits on his part too; but he profits in a ſubordinate way, as our colonies do; that is, as the ſervant of a wiſe and indulgent maſter, and no otherwiſe. We have all, except the *peculium*, without which even ſlaves will not labour.

If the author's principles, which are the common notions, be right, that the price of our manufactures is ſo greatly enhanced by our taxes; then the Americans already pay in that way a ſhare of our impoſitions. He is not aſhamed to aſſert, "that France and China may be ſaid, on the ſame "principle, to bear a part of our charges, for they con-"ſume our commodities." Was ever ſuch a method of reaſoning heard of? Do not the laws abſolutely confine the colonies to buy from us, whether foreign nations ſell cheaper or not? On what other idea are all our prohibitions, regulations, guards, penalties, and forfeitures, framed? To ſecure to us, not a commercial preference, which ſtands in need of no penalties to enforce it; it finds its own way; but to ſecure to us a trade, which is a creature of law and inſtitution. What has this to do with the principles of a foreign trade, which is under no monopoly, and in which we cannot raiſe the price of our goods, without hazarding the demand for them? None but the authors of ſuch meaſures could ever think of making uſe of ſuch arguments.

Whoever goes about to reaſon on any part of the policy of this country with regard to America, upon the mere abſtract principles of government, or even upon thoſe of our own antient conſtitution, will be often miſled. Thoſe who reſort for arguments to the moſt reſpectable authorities,

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antient or modern, or reſt upon the cleareſt maxims, drawn from the experience of other ſtates and empires, will be liable to the greateſt errors imaginable. The object is wholly new in the world. It is ſingular: it is grown up to this magnitude and importance within the memory of man; nothing in hiſtory is parallel to it. All the reaſonings about it, that are likely to be at all ſolid, muſt be drawn from its actual circumſtances. In this new ſyſtem, a principle of commerce, of artificial commerce, muſt predominate. This commerce muſt be ſecured by a multitude of reſtraints, very alien from the ſpirit of liberty; and a powerful authority muſt reſide in the principal ſtate, in order to enforce them. But the people who are to be the objects of theſe reſtraints are deſcendants of Engliſhmen; and of an high and free ſpirit. To hold over them a government made up of nothing but reſtraints, and penalties, and taxes, in the granting of which they can have no ſhare, will neither be wiſe, nor long practicable. People muſt be governed in a manner agreeable to their temper and diſpoſition; and men of free character and ſpirit muſt be ruled with, at leaſt, ſome condeſcenſion to this ſpirit and this character. The Britiſh coloniſt muſt ſee ſomething which will diſtinguiſh him from the coloniſts of other nations. Thoſe reaſonings, which infer from the many reſtraints under which we have already laid America, to our right to lay it under ſtill more, and indeed under all manner of reſtraints, are concluſive; concluſive as to right; but the very reverſe as to policy and practice. We ought rather to infer from our having laid the colonies under many reſtraints, that it is reaſonable to compenſate them by every indulgence that can by any means be reconciled to our intereſt. We have a great empire to rule, compoſed of a vaſt maſs of heterogeneous governments, all more or leſs free and popular in their forms, all to be kept in peace, and kept out of conſpiracy, with one another, all to be held in ſubordination to this country; while the ſpirit of an extenſive and intricate trading intereſt pervades the whole, always qualifying, and often controlling, every general idea of conſtitution and government. It is a great and difficult object; and I wiſh we may poſſeſs wiſdom and temper enough to govern it as we ought. Its importance is infinite. I believe the reader will be ſtruck, as I have been, with one ſingular fact. In the year 1704, but ſixty-five years ago, the whole trade with our plantations was but a few thouſand pounds more in the export article, and

a third leſs in the import, than that which we now carry on with the ſingle iſland of Jamaica;

| | Exports. | Imports. |
|---|---|---|
| Total Engliſh plantations in 1704, | 483,265 | 814,491 |
| Jamaica, 1767 | 467,681 | 1,243,742 |

From the ſame information, I find that our dealing with moſt of the European nations is but little encreaſed; theſe nations have been pretty much at a ſtand ſince that time; and we have rivals in their trade. This colony intercourſe is a new world of commerce in a manner created; it ſtands upon principles of its own; principles hardly worth endangering for any little conſideration of extorted revenue.

The reader ſees, that I do not enter ſo fully into this matter, as obviouſly I might. I have already been led into greater lengths than I intended. It is enough to ſay, that, before the miniſters of 1765 had determined to propoſe the repeal of the ſtamp act in parliament, they had the whole of the American conſtitution and commerce very fully before them. They conſidered maturely; they decided with wiſdom: let me add, with firmneſs. For they reſolved, as a preliminary to that repeal, to aſſert in the fulleſt and leaſt equivocal terms the unlimited legiſlative right of this country over its colonies; and, having done this, to propoſe the repeal, on principles, not of conſtitutional right, but on thoſe of expediency, of equity, of lenity, and of the true intereſts preſent and future of that great object, for which alone the colonies were founded, navigation and commerce. This plan, I ſay, required an uncommon degree of firmneſs; when we conſider that ſome of thoſe perſons who might be of the greateſt uſe in promoting the repeal, violently withſtood the declaratory act; and they who agreed with adminiſtration in the principles of that law, equally made, as well the reaſons on which the declaratory act itſelf ſtood, as thoſe on which it was oppoſed, grounds for an oppoſition to the repeal.

If the then miniſtry reſolved firſt to declare the right, it was not from any opinion they entertained of its future uſe in regular taxation. Their opinions were full and declared againſt the ordinary uſe of ſuch a power. But it was plain, that the general reaſonings which were employed againſt that power, went directly to our whole legiſlative right; and one part of it could not be yielded to ſuch arguments,

ments, without a virtual ſurrender of all the reſt. Beſides, if that very ſpecific power of levying money in the colonies were not retained as a ſacred truſt in the hands of Great Britain (to be uſed, not in the firſt inſtance for ſupply, but in the laſt exigence for controul) it is obvious, that the preſiding authority of Great Britain, as the head, the arbiter and director of the whole empire, would vaniſh into an empty name, without operation or energy. With the habitual exerciſe of ſuch a power in the ordinary courſe of ſupply, no trace of freedom could remain to America [x]. If Great Britain were ſtripped of this right, every principle of unity and ſubordination in the empire was gone for ever. Whether all this can be reconciled in legal ſpeculation, is a matter of no conſequence. It is reconciled in policy; and politics ought to be adjuſted, not to human reaſonings, but to human nature; of which the reaſon is but a part; and by no means the greateſt part.

Founding the repeal on this baſis, it was judged proper to lay before parliament the whole detail of the American affairs, as fully as it had been laid before the miniſtry themſelves. Ignorance of thoſe affairs had miſled parliament. Knowledge alone could bring it into the right road. Every paper of office was laid upon the table of the two houſes; every denomination of men, either of America, or connected with it by office, by reſidence, by commerce, by intereſt, even by injury; men of civil and military capacity, officers of the revenue, merchants, manufacturers of every ſpecies, and from every town in England, attended at the bar. Such evidence never was laid before parliament. If an emulation aroſe among the miniſters, and members of parliament, as the author rightly obſerves, for the repeal of this act, as well as for the other regulations, it was not on the confident aſſertions, the airy ſpeculations, or the vain promiſes of miniſters, that it aroſe. It was the ſenſe

[x] I do not here enter into the unſatisfactory diſquiſition concerning repreſentation, real or preſumed. I only ſay, that a great people, who have their property, without any reſerve, in all caſes, diſpoſed of by another people at an immenſe diſtance from them, will not think themſelves in the enjoyment of freedom. It will be hard to ſhew to thoſe who are in ſuch a ſtate, which of the uſual parts of the definition or deſcription of a free people are applicable to them; and it is neither pleaſant nor wiſe to attempt to prove that they have no right to be comprehended in ſuch a deſcription.

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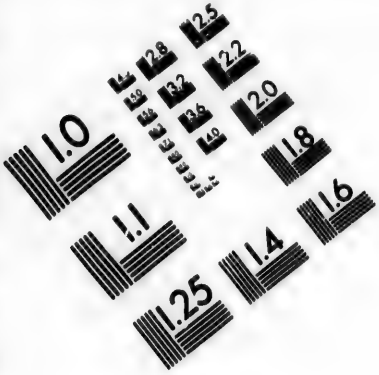


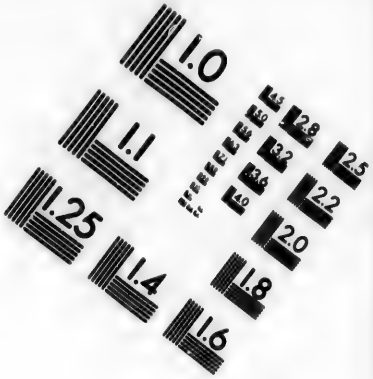


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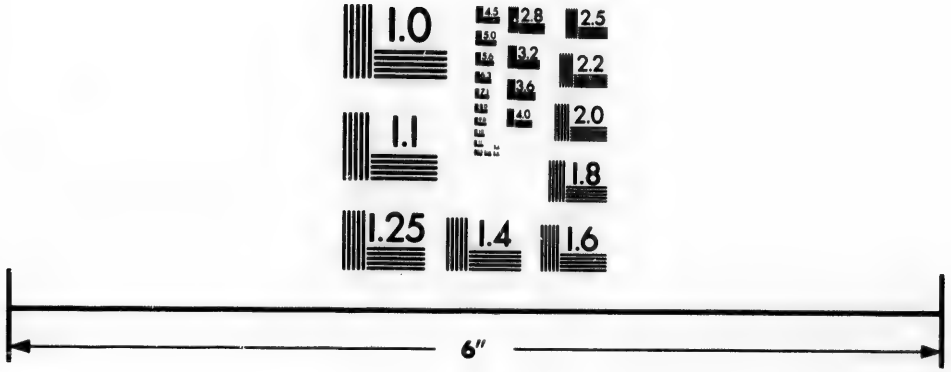

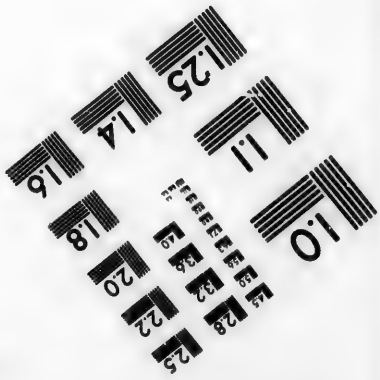


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of parliament on the evidence before them. No one ſo much as ſuſpects, that miniſterial allurements or terrors had any ſhare in it.

Our author is very much diſpleaſed, that ſo much credit was given to the teſtimony of merchants. He has an habit of railing at them; and he may, if he pleaſes, indulge himſelf in it. It will not do great miſchief to that reſpectable ſet of men. The ſubſtance of their teſtimony was, that their debts in America were very great: That the Americans declined to pay them, or to renew their orders, whilſt this act continued: That, under theſe circumſtances, they deſpaired of the recovery of their debts, or the renewal of their trade in that country: That they apprehended a general failure of mercantile credit. The manufacturers depoſed to the ſame general purpoſe, with this addition, that many of them had diſcharged ſeveral of their artificers; and, if the law, and the reſiſtance to it ſhould continue, muſt diſmiſs them all.

This teſtimony is treated with great contempt by our author. It muſt be, I ſuppoſe, becauſe it was contradicted by the plain nature of things. Suppoſe then, that the merchants had, to gratify this author, given a contrary evidence; and had depoſed, that while America remained in a ſtate of reſiſtance, whilſt four millions of debt remained unpaid, whilſt the courſe of juſtice was ſuſpended for want of ſtamped paper, ſo that no debt could be recovered, whilſt there was a total ſtop to trade, becauſe every ſhip was ſubject to ſeizure for want of ſtamped clearances, and while the colonies were to be declared in rebellion, and ſubdued by armed force, that in theſe circumſtances they would ſtill continue to trade chearfully and fearleſsly as before; would not ſuch witneſſes provoke univerſal indignation for their folly or their wickedneſs, and be deſervedly hooted from the bar[y]? would any human faith have given credit

[y] Here the author has a note altogether in his uſual ſtrain of reaſoning; he finds out that ſomebody, in the courſe of this multifarious evidence, had ſaid, "that a very conſiderable part of "the orders of 1765 tranſmitted from America had been after-"wards ſuſpended; but that, in caſe the ſtamp act was repealed, "thoſe orders were to be executed in the preſent year 1766;" and that, on the repeal of the ſtamp act, "the exports to the "colonies would be at leaſt double the value of the exports of "the paſt year." He then triumphs exceedingly on their having fallen

credit to ſuch aſſertions? The teſtimony of the merchants was neceſſary for the detail, and to bring the matter home to the feeling of the houſe; as to the general reaſons, they ſpoke abundantly for themſelves.

Upon

fallen ſhort of it, on the ſtate of the cuſtom-houſe entries. I do not know well what concluſion he draws applicable to his purpoſe, from theſe facts. He does not deny that all the orders which came from America ſubſequent to the diſturbances of the ſtamp act were on the condition of that act being repealed; and he does not aſſert that, notwithſtanding that act ſhould be enforced by a ſtrong hand, ſtill the orders would be executed. Neither does he quite venture to ſay that this decline of the trade in 1766 was owing to the repeal. What does he therefore infer from it, favourable to the enforcement of that law? It only comes to this, and no more; thoſe merchants, who thought our trade would be doubled in the ſubſequent year, were miſtaken in their ſpeculations. So that the ſtamp act was not to be repealed unleſs this ſpeculation of theirs was a probable event. But it was not repealed in order to double our trade in that year, as every body knows (whatever ſome merchants might have ſaid) but leſt in that year we ſhould have no trade at all. The fact is, that, during the greateſt part of the year 1765, that is, until about the month of October, when the accounts of the diſturbances came thick upon us, the American trade went on as uſual. Before this time the ſtamp act could not affect it. Afterwards, the merchants fell into a great conſternation; a general ſtagnation of trade enſued. But as ſoon as it was known that the miniſtry favoured the repeal of the ſtamp act, ſeveral of the bolder merchants ventured to execute their orders; others more timid hung back; in this manner the trade continued in a ſtate of dreadful fluctuation between the fears of thoſe who had ventured, for the event of their boldneſs, and the anxiety of thoſe whoſe trade was ſuſpended, until the royal aſſent was finally given to the bill of repeal. That the trade of 1766 was not equal to that of 1765, could not be owing to the repeal; it aroſe from quite different cauſes, of which the author ſeems not to be aware: 1ſt, Our conqueſts during the war had laid open the trade of the French and Spaniſh Weſt Indies to North America much more largely than ſhe had ever enjoyed it; this continued for ſome time after the peace; but at length it was extremely contracted, and in ſome places reduced to nothing. Such in particular was the ſtate of Jamaica. On the taking the Havannah, all their ſtores were emptied into that place, which produced unuſual orders for goods, for ſupplying their own conſumption, as well as for further ſpeculations of trade. Theſe ceaſing, the trade ſtood on its own bottom. This is one cauſe of the diminiſhed export to Jamaica; and not the childiſh idea of

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Upon theſe principles was the act repealed, and it produced all the good effect which was expected from it: quiet was reſtored; trade generally returned to its antient channels; time and means were furniſhed for the better ſtrengthening of government there, as well as for recovering, by judicious meaſures, the affections of the people, had that miniſtry continued, or had a miniſtry ſucceeded with diſpoſitions to improve that opportunity.

Such an adminiſtration did not ſucceed. Inſtead of profiting of that ſeaſon of tranquility, in the very next year they choſe to return to meaſures of the very ſame nature with thoſe which had been ſo ſolemnly condemned; though upon a ſmaller ſcale. The effects have been correſpondent. America is again in diſorder; not indeed in the ſame degree as formerly, nor any thing like it. Such good effects have attended the repeal of the ſtamp act, that the colonies have actually paid the taxes; and they have ſought their redreſs (upon however improper principles) not in their own violence, as formerly [z]; but in the experienced benignity of parliament. They are not eaſy indeed, nor ever will be ſo, under this author's ſchemes of taxation; but we ſee no longer the ſame general fury and confuſion, which attended their reſiſtance to the ſtamp act. The author may rail at the repeal, and thoſe who propoſed it, as he pleaſes. Thoſe honeſt men ſuffer all his obloquy with pleaſure, in the midſt of the quiet which they have been the means of giving to their country; and would think his praiſes for

the author, of an impoſſible contraband from the opening of the ports. 2d, The war had brought a great influx of caſh into America, for the pay and proviſion of the troops; and this an unnatural encreaſe of trade; which, as its cauſe failed, muſt in ſome degree return to its antient and natural bounds. 3d, When the merchants met from all parts, and compared their accounts, they were alarmed at the immenſity of the debt due to them from America. They found that the Americans had over-traded their abilities. And, as they found too that ſeveral of them were capable of making the ſtate of political events an excuſe for their failure in commercial punctuality, many of our merchants in ſome degree contracted their trade from that moment. However it is idle, in ſuch an immenſe maſs of trade ſo liable to fluctuation, to infer any thing from ſuch a deficiency, as one, or even as two hundred thouſand pounds. In 1767, when the diſturbances ſubſided, this deficiency was made up again.

[z] The diſturbances have been in Boſton only; and were not in conſequence of the late duties.

their

their perſeverance in a pernicious ſcheme, a very bad compenſation for the diſturbance of our peace, and the ruin of our commerce. Whether the return to the ſyſtem of 1764, for raiſing a revenue in America, the diſcontents which have enſued in conſequence of it, the general ſuſpenſion of the aſſemblies in conſequence of theſe diſcontents, the uſe of the military power, and the new and dangerous commiſſions which now hang over them, will produce equally good effects, is greatly to be doubted. Never, I fear, will this nation and the colonies fall back upon their true centre of gravity, and natural point of repoſe, until the ideas of 1766 are reſumed, and ſteadily purſued.

As to the regulations, a great ſubject of the author's accuſation, they are of two ſorts; one of a mixed nature, of revenue and trade; the other ſimply relative to trade. With regard to the former I ſhall obſerve, that, in all deliberations concerning America, the ideas of that adminiſtration were principally theſe; to take trade as the primary object, and revenue but as a very ſubordinate conſideration; where the trade was likely to ſuffer, they did not heſitate for an inſtant to prefer it to taxes, whoſe produce at beſt was contemptible, in compariſon of the object which they might endanger. The other of their principles was, to ſuit the revenue to the object. Where the difficulty of collection, from the nature of the country, and of the revenue eſtabliſhment, is ſo very notorious, it was their policy to hold out as few temptations to ſmuggling as poſſible, by keeping the duties as nearly as they could on a balance with the riſque. On theſe principles, they made many alterations in the port duties of 1764, both in the mode, and in the quantity. The author has not attempted to prove them erroneous. He complains enough to ſhew that he is in an ill humour, not that his adverſaries have done amiſs.

As to the regulations which were merely relative to commerce, many were then made; and they were all made upon this principle; that many of the colonies, and thoſe ſome of the moſt abounding in people, were ſo ſituated as to have very few means of traffick with this country. It became therefore our object to let them into as much foreign trade as could be given them without interfering with our own; and to ſecure by every method the returns to the mother country. Without ſome ſuch ſcheme of enlargement, it was obvious, that any benefit we could expect from theſe colonies muſt be extremely limited. Accordingly many facilities

cilities were given to their trade with the foreign plantations, and with the Southern parts of Europe. As to the confining the returns to this country, adminiſtration ſaw the miſchief and folly of a plan of indiſcriminate reſtraint. They applied their remedy to that part where the diſeaſe exiſted, and to that only; on this idea they eſtabliſhed regulations, far more likely to check the dangerous clandeſtine trade with Hamburgh and Holland, than this author's friends, or any of their predeceſſors, had ever done.

The friends of the author have a method ſurely a little whimſical in all this ſort of diſcuſſions. They have made an innumerable multitude of commercial regulations, at which the trade of England exclaimed with one voice, and many of which have been altered on the unanimous opinion of that trade. Still they go on, juſt as before, in a ſort of droning panegyric on themſelves, talking of theſe regulations as prodigies of wiſdom; and, inſtead of appealing to thoſe who are moſt affected and the beſt judges, they turn round in a perpetual circle of their own reaſonings and pretences; they hand you over from one of their own pamphlets to another; "ſee," ſay they, "this demonſtrated in "The Regulations of the Colonies." "See this ſatisfac-"torily proved in The Conſiderations." By and by we ſhall have another; "ſee for this The State of the Nation." I wiſh to take another method in vindicating the oppoſite ſyſtem. I refer to the petitions of merchants for theſe regulations; to their thanks when they were obtained; and to the ſtrong and grateful ſenſe they have ever ſince expreſſed of the benefits received under that adminiſtration.

All adminiſtrations have in their commercial regulations been generally aided by the opinion of ſome merchants; too frequently by that of a few, and thoſe a ſort of favourites: they have been directed by the opinion of one or two merchants, who were to merit in flatteries, and to be paid in contracts; who frequently adviſed, not for the general good of trade, but for their private advantage. During the adminiſtration of which this author complains, the meeting of merchants upon the buſineſs of trade were numerous and public; ſometimes at the houſe of the Marquis of Rockingham, ſometimes at Mr. Dowdeſwell's; ſometimes at Sir George Savile's, an houſe always open to every deliberation favourable to the liberty or commerce of his country. Nor were theſe meetings confined to the merchants of London. Merchants and manufacturers were invited from all the conſiderable

ſiderable towns of England. They conferred with the miniſters and active members of parliament. No private views, no local intereſts prevailed. Never were points in trade ſettled upon a larger ſcale of information. They who attended theſe meetings well know, what miniſters they were who heard the moſt patiently, who comprehended the moſt clearly, and who provided the moſt wiſely. Let then this author and his friends ſtill continue in poſſeſſion of the practice of exalting their own abilities in their pamphlets, and in the news-papers. They never will perſuade the public, that the merchants of England were in a general confederacy to ſacrifice their own intereſts to thoſe of North America, and to deſtroy the vent of their own goods in favour of the manufactures of France and Holland.

Had the friends of this author taken theſe means of information, his extreme terrors of contraband in the Weſt India Iſlands would have been greatly quieted, and his objections to the opening of the ports would have ceaſed. He would have learned, from the moſt ſatisfactory analyſis of the Weſt India trade, that we have the advantage in every eſſential article of it; and, that almoſt every reſtriction on our communication with our neigbours there, is a reſtriction unfavourable to ourſelves.

Such were the principles that guided, and the authority which ſanctioned, theſe regulations. No man ever ſaid, that, in the multiplicity of regulations made in the adminiſtration of their predeceſſors, none were uſeful: ſome certainly were ſo; and I defy the author to ſhew a commercial regulation of that period, which he can prove, from any authority except his own, to have a tendency beneficial to commerce, that has been repealed. So far were that miniſtry from being guided by a ſpirit of contradiction or of innovation.

The author's attack on that adminiſtration, for their neglect of our claims on foreign powers, is by much the moſt aſtoniſhing inſtance he has given, or that, I believe, any man ever did give, of an intrepid effrontery. It relates to the Manilla ranſom; to the Canada bills; and to the Ruſſian treaty. Could one imagine, that theſe very things, which he thus chooſes to object to others, have been the principal ſubjects of charge againſt his favourite miniſtry; inſtead of clearing them of theſe charges, he appears not ſo much as to have heard of them, but throws them directly

reſtly upon the adminiſtration which ſucceeded to that of his friends.

It is not always very pleaſant to be obliged to produce the detail of this kind of tranſactions to the public view. I will content myſelf therefore with giving a ſhort ſtate of facts, which, when the author chuſes to contradict, he ſhall ſee proved, more, perhaps, to his conviction, than to his liking. The firſt fact then is, that the demand for the Manilla ranſom had been, in the author's favourite adminiſtration, ſo neglected, as to appear to have been little leſs than tacitly abandoned. At home, no countenance was given to the claimants; and when it was mentioned in parliament, the then leader did not ſeem, at leaſt, *a very ſanguine advocate in favour of the claim.* Theſe things made it a matter of no ſmall difficulty to reſume and preſs that negotiation with Spain. However, ſo clear was our right, that the then miniſters reſolved to revive it; and ſo little time was loſt, that, though that adminiſtration was not compleated until the ninth of July, 1765; on the 20th of the following Auguſt, General Conway tranſmitted a ſtrong and full remonſtrance on that ſubject, to the Earl of Rochfort. The argument, on which the court of Madrid moſt relied, was the dereliction of that claim by the preceding miniſters. However, it was ſtill puſhed with ſo much vigour, that the Spaniards, from a poſitive denial to pay, offered to refer the demand to arbitration. That propoſition was rejected; and the demand being ſtill preſſed, there was all the reaſon in the world to expect its being brought to a favourable iſſue; when it was thought proper to change the adminiſtration. Whether, under theſe circumſtances, and in the time they continued in power, more could be done, the reader will judge; who will hear with aſtoniſhment a charge of remiſſneſs from thoſe very men, whoſe inactivity, to call it by no worſe a name, laid the chief difficulties in the way of the revived negotiation.

As to the Canada bills, this author thinks proper to aſſert, "that the proprietors found themſelves under a neceſ-"ſity of compounding their demands upon the French "court, and accepting terms which they had often re-"jected, and which the Earl of Halifax had declared he "would ſooner forfeit his hand than ſign." When I know that the Earl of Halifax ſays this, the earl of Halifax ſhall have an anſwer; but I perſuade myſelf that his Lordſhip has given no authority for this ridiculous rant. In the mean time,

time, I ſhall only ſpeak of it as a common concern of that miniſtry.

In the firſt place then I obſerve, that a convention, for the liquidation of the Canada bills, was concluded under the adminiſtration of 1766; when nothing was concluded under that of the favourites of this author.

2. This tranſaction was, in every ſtep of it, carried on in concert with the perſons intereſted, and was terminated to their entire ſatisfaction. They would have acquieſced perhaps in terms ſomewhat lower than thoſe which were obtained. The author is indeed too kind to them. He will, however, let them ſpeak for themſelves, and ſhew what their own opinion was of the meaſures purſued in their favour[a]. In what manner the execution of the convention has been ſince provided for, it is not my preſent buſineſs to examine.

3. The proprietors had abſolutely deſpaired of being paid, at any time, any proportion of their demand, until the change of that miniſtry. The merchants were checked and diſcountenanced; they had often been told, by ſome in authority, of the cheap rate at which theſe Canada bills had been procured; yet the author can talk of the compoſition of them as a neceſſity induced by the change in adminiſtration. They found themſelves indeed, before that change, under a neceſſity of hinting ſomewhat of bringing the matter into parliament; but they were ſoon ſilenced, and put in mind of the fate which the Newfoundland buſineſs had there met with. Nothing ſtruck them more than

[a] "They are happy in having found, in your zeal for the dignity of this nation, the means of liquidating their claims, and of concluding with the court of France, a convention for the final ſatisfaction of their demands; and have given us commiſſion, in their names, and on their behalf, moſt earneſtly to entreat your acceptance of their grateful acknowledgments.—Whether they conſider themſelves as Britons, or as men more particularly profiting by your generous and ſpirited interpoſition; they ſee great reaſons to be thankful, for having been ſupported by a miniſter, in whoſe public affections, in whoſe wiſdom and activity, both the national honour, and the intereſts of individuals, have been at once ſo well ſupported and ſecured.' Thanks of the Canada merchants to General Conway, London, April 28, 1766.

the ſtrong contraſt between the ſpirit, and method of proceeding, of the two adminiſtrations.

4. The Earl of Halifax never did, nor could, refuſe to ſign this convention; becauſe this convention, as it ſtands, never was before him [b].

The author's laſt charge on that miniſtry, with regard to foreign affairs, is the Ruſſian treaty of commerce, which the author thinks fit to aſſert, was concluded "on terms "the Earl of Buckinghamſhire had refuſed to accept of, "and which had been deemed by former miniſters diſad- "vantageous to the nation, and by the merchants unſafe "and unprofitable."

Both the aſſertions in this paragraph are equally groundleſs. The treaty then concluded by Sir George Macartney, was not on the terms which the Earl of Buckinghamſhire had refuſed. The Earl of Buckinghamſhire never did refuſe terms, becauſe the buſineſs never came to the point of refuſal or acceptance; all that he did was, to receive the Ruſſian project for a treaty of commerce, and to tranſmit it to England. This was in November, 1764; and he left Peterſburgh the January following, before he could even receive an anſwer from his own court. The concluſion of the treaty fell to his ſucceſſor. Whoever will be at the trouble to compare it with the treaty of 1734, will, I believe, confeſs, that, if the former miniſters could have obtained ſuch terms, they were criminal in not accepting them.

But the merchants "deemed them unſafe and unprofita- "ble." What merchants? As no treaty ever was more maturely conſidered, ſo the opinion of the Ruſſian merchants in London was all along taken; and all the inſtructions ſent over were in exact conformity to that opinion. Our miniſter there made no ſtep without having previouſly conſulted our merchants reſidents in Peterſburgh, who, before the ſigning the treaty, gave the moſt full and unanimous teſtimony in its favour. In their addreſs to our miniſter at that court, among other things, they ſay, "It "may afford ſome additional ſatisfaction to your excellen- "cy, to receive a public acknowledgment of *the entire and* "*unreſerved approbation of every article* in this treaty, from "us who are ſo immediately and ſo nearly concerned in its,

[b] See the convention itſelf, printed by Owen and Harriſon, Warwick-lane, 1766; particularly the articles 2 and 13.

"conſe-

"consequences." This was signed by the consul general, and every British merchant in Peterſburgh.

The approbation of thoſe immediately concerned in the conſequences is nothing to this author. He and his friends have ſo much tenderneſs for peoples intereſts, and underſtand them ſo much better than they do themſelves, that, whilſt theſe politicians are contending for the beſt of poſſible terms, the claimants are obliged to go without any terms at all.

One of the firſt and juſteſt complaints againſt the adminiſtration of the author's friends, was the want of vigour in their foreign negotiations. Their immediate ſucceſſors endeavoured to correct that error, along with others; and there was ſcarcely a foreign court, in which the new ſpirit that had ariſen was not ſenſibly felt, acknowledged, and ſometimes complained of. On their coming into adminiſtration, they found the demolition of Dunkirk entirely at a ſtand: inſtead of demolition, they found conſtruction; for the French were then at work on the repair of the jettees. On the remonſtrances of General Conway, ſome parts of the jettees were immediately deſtroyed. The Duke of Richmond perſonally ſurveyed the place, and obtained a fuller knowledge of its true ſtate and condition than any of our miniſters had done; and, in conſequence, had larger offers from the Duke of Choiſeul, than had ever been received. But, knowing theſe to be ſhort of our juſt expectations under the treaty, he rejected them. Our then miniſters, knowing that, in their adminiſtration, the peoples minds were ſet at eaſe upon all the eſſential points of public and private liberty, and that no project of theirs could endanger the concord of the empire, were under no reſtraint from purſuing every juſt demand upon foreign nations.

The author, towards the end of this work, falls into reflections upon the ſtate of public morals in this country: He draws uſe from his doctrine, by recommending his friend to the King and the publick, as another Duke of Sully; and he concludes the whole performance with a very devout prayer. The prayers of politicians may ſometimes be ſincere; and as this prayer is in ſubſtance, that the author, or his friends, may be ſoon brought into power, I have great reaſon to believe it is very much from the heart. However, after he has drawn ſuch a picture, ſuch a ſhocking picture, of the ſtate of this country, he has

great faith in thinking the means he prays for, ſufficient to relieve us: after the character he has given of its inhabitants of all ranks and claſſes, he has great charity in caring much about them; and indeed, no leſs hope, in being of opinion, that ſuch a deteſtable nation can ever become the care of Providence. He has not even found five good men in our devoted city.

He talks indeed of men of virtue and ability. But, where are his *men* of virtue and ability to be found? Are they in the preſent adminiſtration? never were a ſet of people more blackened by this author. Are they among the party of thoſe (no ſmall body) who adhere to the ſyſtem of 1766? theſe, it is the great purpoſe of this book, to calumniate. Are they the perſons who acted with his great friend, ſince the change in 1762, to his removal in 1765? ſcarcely any of theſe are now out of employment; and we are in poſſeſſion of his deſideratum. Yet I think he hardly means to ſelect, even ſome of the higheſt of them, as examples fit for the reformation of a corrupt world.

He obſerves, that the virtue of the moſt exemplary prince that ever ſwayed a ſcepter "can never warm or il-"luminate the body of his people, if foul mirrours are "placed ſo near him as to refract and diſſipate the rays at "their firſt emanation." Without obſerving upon the propriety of this alluſion, or aſking how mirrours come to have loſt their old quality of reflecting, and to have acquired that of refracting and diſſipating rays, and how far their foulneſs will account for this change; the remark itſelf is common and true: no leſs true, and equally ſurprizing from him, is that which immediately precedes it; "it is "in vain to endeavour to check the progreſs of irreligion "and licentiouſneſs, by puniſhing ſuch crimes in *one indi-*"*vidual*, if others equally culpable are rewarded with the "honours and emoluments of the ſtate." I am not in the ſecret of the author's manner of writing; but it appears to me, that he muſt intend theſe reflections, as a ſatire upon the adminiſtration of his happy years. Were ever the favours and emoluments of the ſtate more laviſhly ſquandered upon perſons ſcandalous in their lives, than during that period? In theſe ſcandalous lives, was there any thing more ſcandalous than the mode of puniſhing *one culpable individual?* In that individual, is any thing more culpable, than his having been ſeduced by the example of ſome of thoſe very perſons by whom he was thus perſecuted?

The

The author is ſo eager to attack others, that he provides but indifferently for his own defence. I believe, without going beyond the page I have now before me, he is very ſenſible, that I have ſufficient matter of further, and, if poſſible, of heavier charge, againſt his friends, upon his own principles. But it is becauſe the advantage is too great, that I decline making uſe of it. I wiſh the author had not thought, that all methods are lawful in party. Above all, he ought to have taken care not to wound his enemies through the ſides of his country. This he has done, by making that monſtrous and overcharged picture of the diſtreſſes of our ſituation. No wonder that he, who finds this country in the ſame condition with that of France at the time of Henry the Fourth, could alſo find a reſemblance between his political friend and the Duke of Sully. As to thoſe perſonal reſemblances, people will often judge of them from their affections: they may imagine in theſe clouds whatſoever figures they pleaſe; but what is the conformation of that eye which can diſcover a reſemblance of this country and theſe times, to thoſe with which the author compares them. France, a country juſt recovered out of twenty-five years of the moſt cruel and deſolating civil war that perhaps was ever known. The kingdom, under a veil of momentary quiet, full of the moſt atrocious political, operating upon the moſt furious fanatical factions. Some pretenders even to the crown; and thoſe who did not pretend to the whole, aimed at the partition of the monarchy. There were almoſt as many competitors as provinces; and all abetted by the greateſt, the moſt ambitious, and moſt enterprizing power in Europe. No place ſafe from treaſon; no, not the boſoms on which the moſt amiable prince that ever lived, repoſed his head; not his miſtreſſes; not even his queen. As to the finances, they had ſcarce an exiſtence, but as a matter of plunder to the managers, and of grants to inſatiable, and ungrateful courtiers.

How can our author have the heart to deſcribe this as any ſort of parallel to our ſituation? To be ſure, an April ſhower has ſome reſemblance to a water ſpout, for they are both wet; and there is ſome likeneſs between a ſummer evening's breeze, and an hurricane; they are both wind: but who can compare our diſturbances, our ſituation, or our finances, to thoſe of France? Great Britain is indeed at this time wearied, but not broken, with the efforts of a victorious foreign war; not ſufficiently relieved

by an inadequate peace; but ſomewhat benefited by that peace, and infinitely by the conſequences of that war. The powers of Europe awed by our victories, and lying in ruins upon every ſide of us. Burthened indeed we are with debt, but abounding with reſources. We have a trade, not perhaps equal to our wiſhes, but more than ever we poſſeſſed. In effect, no pretender to the crown; nor nutriment for ſuch deſperate and deſtructive factions as have formerly ſhaken this kingdom.

As to our finances, the author trifles with us. When Sully came to thoſe of France, in what order was any part of the financial ſyſtem? or what ſyſtem was there at all? There is no man in office who muſt not be ſenſible, that ours is, without the act of any parading miniſter, the moſt regular and orderly ſyſtem perhaps that was ever known; the beſt ſecured againſt all frauds in the collection, and all miſapplication in the expenditure of public money.

I admit that, in this flouriſhing ſtate of things, there are appearances enough to excite uneaſineſs and apprehenſion. I admit there is a canker-worm in the roſe:

*——medio de fonte leporum*
*Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipſis floribus angat.*

This is nothing elſe than a ſpirit of diſconnection, of diſtruſt, and of treachery, amongſt public men. It is no accidental evil; nor has its effect been truſted to the uſual frailty of nature: the diſtemper has been inoculated. The author is ſenſible of it, and we lament it together. This diſtemper is alone ſufficient to take away conſiderably from the benefits of our conſtitution and ſituation, and perhaps to render their continuance precarious. If theſe evil diſpoſitions ſhould ſpread much farther, they muſt end in our deſtruction; for nothing can ſave a people deſtitute of public and private faith. However, the author, for the preſent ſtate of things, has extended the charge by much too widely; as men are but too apt to take the meaſures of all mankind from their own particular acquaintance. Barren as this age may be in the growth of honour and virtue, the country does not want, at this moment, as ſtrong, and thoſe not a few examples, as were ever known, of an unſhaken adherence to principle, and attachment to connection, againſt every allurement of intereſt. Thoſe examples are not furniſhed by the great alone; nor by thoſe whoſe activity

vity in public affairs may render it ſuſpected that they make ſuch a character one of the rounds in their ladder of ambition; but by men more quiet, and more in the ſhade, on whom an unmixed ſenſe of honour alone could operate. Such examples indeed are not furniſhed in great abundance amongſt thoſe who are the ſubjects of the author's panegyrick. He muſt look for them in another camp. He who complains of the ill effects of a divided and heterogeneous adminiſtration is not juſtifiable in labouring to render odious in the eyes of the publick thoſe men, whoſe principles, whoſe maxims of policy, and whoſe perſonal character, can alone adminiſter a remedy to this capital evil of the age; neither is he conſiſtent with himſelf, in conſtantly extolling thoſe whom he knows to be the authors of the very miſchief of which he complains, and which the whole nation feels ſo deeply.

The perſons who are the objects of his diſlike and complaint, are many of them of the firſt families, and weightieſt properties, in the kingdom; but infinitely more diſtinguiſhed for their untainted honour public and private, and their zealous but ſober attachment to the conſtitution of their country, than they can be by any birth, or any ſtation. If they are the friends of any one great man, rather than another, it is not that they make his aggrandiſement the end of their union; or becauſe they know him to be the moſt active in caballing for his connections the largeſt and ſpeedieſt emoluments. It is becauſe they know him, by perſonal experience, to have wiſe and enlarged ideas of the public good, and an invincible conſtancy in adhering to it; becauſe they are convinced, by the whole tenour of his conduct, that he will never negotiate away their honour, or his own: and that, in or out of power, change of ſituation will make no alteration in his conduct. This will give to ſuch a perſon, in ſuch a body, an authority and reſpect that no miniſter ever enjoyed among his venal dependants, in the higheſt plenitude of his power; ſuch as ſervility never can give, ſuch as ambition never can receive or reliſh.

This body will often be reproached by their adverſaries, for want of ability in their political tranſactions; they will be ridiculed for miſſing many favourable conjunctures, and not profiting of ſeveral brilliant opportunities of fortune: but they muſt be contented to endure that reproach; for they cannot acquire the reputation of *that kind* of ability, without loſing all the other reputation they poſſeſs.

They will be charged too with a dangerous ſpirit of excluſion and proſcription, for being unwilling to mix in ſchemes of adminiſtration, which have no bond of union, or principle of confidence. That charge too they muſt ſuffer with patience. If the reaſon of the thing had not ſpoken loudly enough, the miſerable examples of the ſeveral adminiſtrations, conſtructed upon the idea of ſyſtematic diſcord, would be enough to frighten them from ſuch monſtrous and ruinous conjunctions. It is however falſe, that the idea of an united adminiſtration carries with it that of a proſcription of any other party. It does indeed imply the neceſſity of having the great ſtrong holds of government in well-united hands, in order to ſecure the predominance of right and uniform principles; of having the capital offices of deliberation and execution in thoſe who can deliberate with mutual confidence, and who will execute what is reſolved with firmneſs and fidelity. If this ſyſtem cannot be rigorouſly adhered to in practice (and what ſyſtem can be ſo?) it ought to be the conſtant aim of good men to approach as nearly to it as poſſible. No ſyſtem of that kind can be formed, which will not leave room fully ſufficient for healing coalitions: but no coalition, which, under the ſpecious name of independency, carries in its boſom the unreconciled principles of the original diſcord of parties, ever was, or will be, an healing coalition. Nor will the mind of our Sovereign ever know repoſe, his kingdom ſettlement, or his buſineſs order, efficiency, or grace with his people, until things are eſtabliſhed upon the baſis of ſome ſet of men, who are truſted by the publick, and who can truſt one another.

This comes rather nearer to the mark than the author's deſcription of a proper adminiſtration, under the name of *men of ability and virtue*, which conveys no definite idea at all; nor does it apply ſpecifically to our grand national diſtemper. All parties pretend to theſe qualities. The preſent miniſtry, no favourites of the author, will be ready enough to declare themſelves perſons of virtue and ability; and if they chooſe a vote for that purpoſe, perhaps it would not be quite impoſſible for them to procure it. But, if the diſeaſe be this diſtruſt and diſconnection, it is eaſy to know who are ſound, and who are tainted; who are fit to reſtore us to health, who to continue, and to ſpread the contagion. The preſent miniſtry being made up of draughts from all parties in the kingdom, if they ſhould profeſs any adherence

to

to the connections they have left, they must convict themselves of the blackest treachery. They therefore choose rather to renounce the principle itself, and to brand it with the name of pride and faction. This test with certainty discriminates the opinions of men. The other is a description vague and unsatisfactory.

As to the unfortunate gentlemen who may at any time compose that system, which, under the plausible title of an administration, subsists but for the establishment of weakness and confusion; they fall into different classes, with different merits. I think the situation of some people in that state, may deserve a certain degree of compassion; at the same time that they furnish an example, which, it is to be hoped, by being a severe one, will have its effect, at least, on the growing generation; if an original seduction, on plausible but fallacious pretences, into loss of honour, friendship, consistency, security, and repose can furnish it. It is possible to draw, even from the very prosperity of ambition, examples of terror, and motives to compassion.

I believe the instances are exceedingly rare of mens immediately passing over a clear marked line of virtue into declared vice and corruption. There are a sort of middle tints and shades between the two extremes; there is something uncertain on the confines of the two empires which they first pass through, and which renders the change easy and imperceptible. There are even a sort of splendid impositions so well contrived, that, at the very time the path of rectitude is quitted for ever, men seem to be advancing into some higher and nobler road of public conduct. Not that such impositions are strong enough in themselves; but a powerful interest, often concealed from those whom it affects, works at the bottom, and secures the operation. Men are thus debauched away from those legitimate connections, which they had formed on a judgment, early perhaps, but sufficiently mature and wholly unbiassed. They do not quit them upon any ground of complaint, for grounds of just complaint may exist, but upon the flattering and most dangerous of all principles, that of mending what is well. Gradually they are habituated to other company; and a change in their habitudes soon makes a way for a change in their opinions. Certain persons are no longer so very frightful, when they come to be known and to be serviceable. As to their old friends, the transition is

easy;

eaſy; from friendſhip to civility; from civility to enmity; few are the ſteps from dereliction to perſecution.

People not very well grounded in the principles of public morality, find a ſet of maxims in office ready made for them, which they aſſume as naturally and inevitably, as any of the inſignia or inſtruments of the ſituation. A certain tone of the ſolid and practical is immediately acquired. Every former profeſſion of public ſpirit is to be conſidered as a debauch of youth, or, at beſt, as a viſionary ſcheme of unattainable perfection. The very idea of conſiſtency is exploded. The convenience of the buſineſs of the day is to furniſh the principle for doing it. Then the whole miniſterial cant is quickly got by heart. The prevalence of faction is to be lamented. All oppoſition is to be regarded as the effect of diſcontent. All adminiſtrations are declared to be alike. The ſame neceſſity juſtifies all their meaſures. It is no longer a matter of diſcuſſion, who or what adminiſtration is; but adminiſtration is to be ſupported as a general maxim. Flattering themſelves, that their power is become neceſſary to the ſupport of all order and government; every thing which tends to the ſupport of that power is ſanctified, and becomes a part of the public intereſt.

Growing every day more formed to affairs, and better knit in their limbs, when the occaſion (now the only rule) requires it, they become capable of ſacrificing thoſe very perſons, to whom they had before ſacrificed their original friends. It is now only in the ordinary courſe of buſineſs to alter an opinion, or to betray a connexion. Frequently relinquiſhing one ſet of men and adopting another, they grow into a total indifference to human feeling, as they had before to moral obligation; until, at length, no one original impreſſion remains upon their minds; every principle is obliterated; every ſentiment effaced.

In the mean time, that power which all theſe changes aimed at ſecuring, remains ſtill as tottering and uncertain as ever. They are delivered up into the hands of thoſe who feel neither reſpect for their perſons, nor gratitude for their favours; who are put about them in appearance to ſerve, in reality to govern them; and, when the ſignal is given, to abandon and deſtroy them; in order to ſet up ſome newer dupe of ambition, who, in his turn, is to be abandoned and deſtroyed. Thus living in a ſtate of continual uneaſineſs and ferment, ſoftened only by the miſerable conſolation of giving

giving now and then preferments to thoſe for whom they have no value; they are unhappy in their ſituation, and find it impoſſible to reſign it. Until, at length, ſoured in temper, and diſappointed by the very attainment of their ends, in ſome angry, in ſome haughty, or ſome negligent moment, they incur the diſpleaſure of thoſe upon whom they have rendered their very being dependent. Then *perierunt tempora longi ſervitii*, they are caſt off with ſcorn; they are turned out, diveſted of all natural character, of all intrinſic worth, of all eſſential dignity, and deprived of every conſolation of friendſhip. Having rendered all retreat to old principles ridiculous, and to old regards impracticable, not being able to counterfeit pleaſure, or to diſcharge diſcontent, nothing being ſincere, or right, or balanced in their minds, it is more than a chance, that, in the delirium of the laſt ſtage of their diſtempered power, they make an inſane political teſtament, by which they throw all their remaining weight and conſequence into the ſcale of their declared enemies, and the avowed authors of their deſtruction. Thus they finiſh their courſe. Had it been poſſible that the whole, or even a great part of theſe effects on their minds, I ſay nothing of the effect upon their fortunes, could have appeared to them in their firſt departure from the right line, it is certain they would have rejected every temptation with horror. The principle of theſe remarks, like every good principle in morality, is trite; but its frequent application is not the leſs neceſſary.

As to others, who are plain practical men, they have been guiltleſs at all times of all public pretence. Neither the author, nor any one elſe, has reaſon to be angry with them. They belonged to his friend for their intereſt; for their intereſt they quitted him; and when it is their intereſt, he may depend upon it, they will return to their former connexion. Such people ſubſiſt at all times, and, though the nuſance of all, are at no time a worthy ſubject of diſcuſſion. It is falſe virtue and plauſible error that do the miſchief.

If men come to government with right diſpoſitions, they have not that unfavourable ſubject which this author repreſents to work upon. Our circumſtances are indeed critical; but then they are the critical circumſtances of a ſtrong and mighty nation. If corruption and meanneſs are greatly ſpread, they are not ſpread univerſally. Many public men are hitherto examples of public ſpirit, and integrity.

Whole

Whole parties, as far as large bodies can be uniform, have preſerved character. However they may be deceived in ſome particulars, I know of no ſet of men amongſt us, which does not contain perſons, on whom the nation, in a difficult exigence, may well value itſelf. Private life, which is the nurſery of the commonwealth, is yet in general pure, and on the whole diſpoſed to virtue; and the people at large want neither generoſity nor ſpirit. No ſmall part of that very luxury, which is ſo much the ſubject of the author's declamation, but which, in moſt parts of life, by being well balanced and diffuſed, is only decency and convenience, has perhaps as many, or more, good than evil conſequences attending it. It certainly excites induſtry, nouriſhes emulation, and inſpires ſome ſenſe of perſonal value into all ranks of people. What we want is, to eſtabliſh more fully an opinion of uniformity, and conſiſtency of character, in the leading men of the ſtate; ſuch as will reſtore ſome confidence to profeſſion and appearance, ſuch as will fix ſubordination upon eſteem. Without this, all ſchemes are begun at the wrong end. All who join them are liable to their conſequences. All men who, under whatever pretext, take a part in the formation, or the ſupport of ſyſtems conſtructed in ſuch a manner, as muſt, in their nature, diſable them from the execution of their duty, have made themſelves guilty of all the preſent diſtraction, and of the future ruin, which they may bring upon their country.

It is a ſerious affair, this ſtudied diſunion in government. In caſes where union is moſt conſulted in the conſtitution of a miniſtry, and where perſons are beſt diſpoſed to promote it, differences, from the various ideas of men, will ariſe; and, from their paſſions, will often ferment into violent heats, ſo as greatly to diſorder all public buſineſs. What muſt be the conſequence, when the very diſtemper is made the baſis of the conſtitution; and the original weakneſs of human nature is ſtill further enfeebled by art and contrivance? It muſt ſubvert government from the very foundation. It turns our public councils into the moſt miſchievous cabals; where the conſideration is not how the nation's buſineſs ſhall be carried on, but how thoſe who ought to carry it on ſhall circumvent each other. In ſuch a ſtate of things, no order, uniformity, dignity, or effect, can appear in our proceedings either at home or abroad. Nor will it make much difference, whether ſome of the conſtituent parts of ſuch an adminiſtration are men of virtue and ability, or not;

not; ſuppoſing it poſſible that ſuch men, with their eyes open, ſhould chooſe to make a part in ſuch a body.

The effects of all human contrivances are in the hand of Providence. I do not like to anſwer, as our author ſo readily does, for the event of any ſpeculation. But ſure the nature of our diſorders, if any thing, muſt indicate the proper remedy. Men who act ſteadily on the principles I have ſtated, may in all events be very ſerviceable to their country; in one caſe, by furniſhing (if their Sovereign ſhould be ſo adviſed) an adminiſtration formed upon ideas very different from thoſe which have for ſome time been unfortunately faſhionable. But, if this ſhould not be the caſe, they may be ſtill ſerviceable; for the example of a large body of men, ſteadily ſacrificing ambition to principle, can never be without uſe. It will certainly be prolific, and draw others to an imitation. *Vera gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur.*

I do not think myſelf of conſequence enough to imitate my author, in troubling the world with the prayers or wiſhes I may form for the publick: full as little am I diſpoſed to imitate his profeſſions; thoſe profeſſions are long ſince worn out in the political ſervice. If the work will not ſpeak for the author, his own declarations deſerve but little credit.

APPEN-

# APPENDIX.

SO much miſplaced induſtry has been uſed by the author of The State of the Nation, as well as by other writers, to infuſe diſcontent into the People, on account of the late war, and of the effects of our national debt; that nothing ought to be omitted which may tend to diſabuſe the public upon theſe ſubjects. When I had gone through the foregoing ſheets, I recollected, that, in my pages 41 and 42, I only gave the comparative ſtates of the duties collected by the exciſe at large; together with the quantities of ſtrong beer brewed in the two periods which are there compared. It might ſtill be thought, that ſome other articles of popular conſumption, of general convenience, and connected with our manufactures, might poſſibly have declined. I therefore now think it right to lay before the reader the ſtate of the produce of three capital duties on ſuch articles; duties which have frequently been made the ſubject of popular complaint. The duty on candles; that on ſoap, paper, &c. and that on hides.

| | £. |
|---|---|
| Average produce duty on ſoap, &c. for 8 years ending 1767, | 264.902 |
| Average of ditto for 8 years, ending 1754, | 228.114 |
| Average encreaſe, | £. 36.788 |
| Average of net produce of duty on candles for 8 years, ending 1767, | 155.789 |
| Average of ditto for 8 years, ending 1754, | 136.716 |
| Average encreaſe, | £. 19.073 |

Average

| | |
|---|---|
| Average net produce of duty on hides, 8 years, ending 1767, | 189.216 |
| Ditto 8 years, ending 1754, | 168.200 |
| Average encreaſe, | £. 21.016 |

This encreaſe has not ariſen from any additional duties. None have been impoſed on theſe articles during the war. Notwithſtanding the burthens of the war, and the late dearneſs of proviſions, the conſumption of all theſe articles has encreaſed, and the revenue along with it.

There is another point in The State of the Nation, to which, I fear, I have not been as full in my anſwer as I ought to have been, and as I am well warranted to be. The author has endeavoured to throw a ſuſpicion, or ſomething more, on that ſalutary, and indeed neceſſary, meaſure of opening the ports in Jamaica. "Orders were gi-"ven," ſays he, "in *Auguſt* 1765, for the free admiſſion "of Spaniſh veſſels into all the colonies." He then obſerves, that the exports to Jamaica fell £.40.904 ſhort of thoſe of 1764; and that the exports of the ſucceeding year, 1766, fell ſhort of thoſe of 1765, about eighty pounds; from whence he wiſely infers, that, this decline of exports being *ſince* the relaxation of the laws of trade, there is a juſt ground of ſuſpicion, that the colonies have been ſupplied with foreign commodities inſtead of Britiſh.

Here, as uſual with him, the author builds on a fact which is abſolutely falſe; and which, being ſo, renders his whole hypotheſis abſurd and impoſſible. He aſſerts, that the order for admitting Spaniſh veſſels was given in *Auguſt*, 1765. That order was not *ſigned at the treaſury board until the 15th day of the November following*; and therefore ſo far from affecting the exports of the year 1765: that ſuppoſing all poſſible diligence in the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms in expediting that order, and every advantage of veſſels ready to ſail, and the moſt favourable wind, it would hardly even arrive in Jamaica within the limits of that year.

This order could therefore by no poſſibility be a cauſe of the decreaſe of exports in 1765. If it had any miſchievous operation, it could not be before 1766. In that year, according to our author, the exports fell ſhort of the preceding, juſt *eighty* pounds. He is welcome to that diminution; and to all the conſequences he can draw from it.

But,

But, as an auxiliary to account for this dreadful loſs, he brings in the Free-port act, which he obſerves (for his convenience) to have been made in ſpring, 1760; but (for his convenience likewiſe) he forgets, that, by the expreſs proviſion of the act, the regulation was not to be in force in Jamaica, until the November following. Miraculous muſt be the activity of that contraband whoſe operation in America could, before the end of that year, have re-acted upon England, and checked the exportation from hence! unleſs he chooſes to ſuppoſe, that the merchants, at whoſe ſolicitations this act had been obtained, were ſo frighted at the accompliſhment of their own moſt earneſt and anxious deſire, that, before any good or evil effect from it could happen, they immediately put a ſtop to all further exportation.

It is obvious that we muſt look for the true effect of that act at the time of its firſt poſſible operation, that is, in the year 1767. On this idea how ſtands the account?

| | £. |
|---|---|
| 1764 Exports to Jamaica | 456.528 |
| 1765 | 415.624 |
| 1766 | 415.544 |
| 1767 (firſt year of the free-port act) | 467.681. |

This author, for the ſake of a preſent momentary credit, will hazard any future and permanent diſgrace. At the time he wrote, the account of 1767 could not be made up. This was the very firſt year of the trial of the free-port act; and we find that the ſale of Britiſh commodities is ſo far from being leſſened by that act, that the exports of 1767 amount to £.52.000 more than that of either of the two preceding years, that is £.11.000 above that of his ſtandard year 1764. If I could prevail on myſelf to argue in favour of a great commercial ſcheme from the appearance of things in a ſingle year, I ſhould from this encreaſe of export, infer the beneficial effects of that meaſure. In truth, it is not wanting. Nothing but the groſſeſt ignorance of the Jamaica trade could have made any one entertain a fancy, that the leaſt ill effect on our commerce could follow from this opening of the ports. But, if the author argues the effect of regulations in the American trade from the export of the year in which they are made, or even of the following; why did he not apply this rule to his own? He had the ſame paper before him which I have now before me. He muſt

muſt have ſeen that in his ſtandard year (the year 1764) the principal year of his new regulations, the export fell no leſs than £.128.450 ſhort of that in 1763. Did the export trade revive by theſe regulations in 1765, during which year they continued in their full force? It fell about £.40.000 ſtill lower. Here is a fall of £.168.000; to account for which, would have become the author much better than piddling for an £.80 fall in the year 1766 (the only year in which *the order* he objects to could operate) or in preſuming a fall of exports from a regulation which took place only in November 1766; whoſe effects could not appear until the following year; and which, when they do appear, utterly overthrow all his flimſy reaſons and affected ſuſpicions upon the effect of opening the ports.

This author, in the ſame paragraph, ſays, that "it was "aſſerted by *the American factors and agents*, that the com- "manders of our ſhips of war and tenders, having cuſtom- "houſe commiſſions, and the ſtrict orders given in 1764 "for a due execution of the laws of trade in the colonies, "had deterred the Spaniards from trading with us; that "the ſale of Britiſh manufactures in the Weſt Indies had "been greatly leſſened, and the receipt of large ſums in "ſpecie prevented."

If the *American factors and agents* aſſerted this, they had good ground for their aſſertion. They knew that the Spaniſh veſſels had been driven from our ports. The author does not poſitively deny the fact. If he ſhould, it will be proved. When the factors connected this meaſure and its natural conſequences, with an actual fall in the exports to Jamaica, to no leſs an amount than £.128.450 in one year, and with a further fall in the next, is their aſſertion very wonderful? The author himſelf is full as much alarmed by a fall of only £.40.000; for, giving him the facts which he chuſes to coin, it is no more. The expulſion of the Spaniſh veſſels muſt certainly have been one cauſe, if not of the firſt declenſion of the exports, yet of their continuance in their reduced ſtate. Other cauſes had their operation, without doubt. In what degree each cauſe produced its effect it is hard to determine. But the fact of a fall of exports upon the reſtraining plan, and of a riſe upon the taking place of the enlarging plan, is eſtabliſhed beyond all contradiction.

This author ſays, that the facts relative to the Spaniſh trade, were aſſerted by *American factors and Agents*; inſinuating, that the miniſtry of 1766 had no better authority for their plan of enlargement than ſuch aſſertions. The moment he chooſes it, he ſhall ſee the very ſame thing aſſerted by governors of provinces, by commanders of men of war, and by officers of the cuſtoms; perſons the moſt bound in duty to prevent contraband, and the moſt intereſted in the ſeizures to be made in conſequence of ſtrict regulation. I ſuppreſs them for the preſent; wiſhing that the author may not drive me to a more full diſcuſſion of this matter than it may be altogether prudent to enter into. I wiſh he had not made any of theſe diſcuſſions neceſſary.

*F I N I S.*